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OXFORD EDITION

Poems of ROBERT SOUTHEY

CONTAINING

THALABA, THE CURSE OF KEHAMA
RODERICK, MADOC, A TALE OF PARAGUAY
AND SELECTED MINOR POEMS

EDITED BY

MAURICE H. FITZGERALD, M.A.



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EDITOR'S PREFACE

'Few people,' it has been said, 'have written so much and so well as Southey, and have been so little read.' The remark refers to his work as a whole--in prose as well as in verse--but it is singularly applicable to his poetry. As a poet Southey is now scarcely known, save as the author of the lines beginning: 'My days among the Dead are past,' and of a few ballads such as The Battle of Blenheim and The Inchcape Rock, which are learnt by children in the nursery. The general estimation in which he is held may be illustrated by the obiter dictum in a recent review, that 'it is impossible to take Southey as a poet seriously'; and he is usually condemned as unreadable without a trial. But it is surely impossible to accept so summary a verdict—a verdict, be it remarked, which is in direct contradiction to that pronounced upon Southey's poetry by the most competent judges of his own day. No one, indeed, would pretend that Southey was one of the greatest of English poets. His position in our poetical hierarchy is far more modest. But a man may attain to an honourable place on the roll of Parnassus, although he fall considerably short of the highest rank, and in his lifetime Southey had no cause to fear the judgement of The praise bestowed upon his poetry by S. T. Coleridge, and by his peers. W. S. Landor, might perhaps be discounted on the ground that each of these two critics was influenced by close personal friendship for its author. But we may cite the opinions of other men free from any suspicion of such bias and equally well qualified to speak. In 1813 Sir Walter Scott declined the laureateship which had been offered him, (though without the Regent's knowledge or approval), by Lord Liverpool; and in declining he suggested to Croker that the post should be offered to Southey. On September 4 of that year he writes to Southey to explain what he has done, and to make it clear, as he expresses it, that he has not himself refused the laurel 'from any foolish prejudice against the situation: otherwise, how durst I mention it to you, my elder brother in the muse?—but from a sort of internal hope that they would give it to you, upon whom it would be so much

more worthily conferred. For I am not such an ass as not to know that you are my better in poetry, though I have had, probably but for a time, the tide of popularity in my favour' (Lockhart's Life of Scott, chap. xxvi). Now, no doubt in this letter Scott was anxious to say pleasant things in a pleasant manner. But he was no humbug. He would never have gone out of his way to coin a false and empty compliment, and he could not have written as he did, unless he had felt a sincere admiration for Southey's poetical powers. Byron, again, whose principles were as opposed to those of Southey in poetry as they were in politics, morality, and religion, was vet constrained to admit the Laureate's claims to admiration as a poet. 'Of his poetry,' he wrote in his journal for November 22, 1813, 'there are various opinions: there is, perhaps, too much of it for the present generation; -posterity will probably select. He has passages equal to anything' (Moore's Life of Byron, chap. xviii). And at a later date he spoke of Roderick as 'the first poem of the time'. To this testimony we may add the witness of another political adversary of Southey, in the person of Macaulay. The young champion of the Edinburgh Review was not the man to deal tenderly with the leading writer of the opposing party. He must have felt towards Southey something of that desire to 'dust the varlet's jacket for him in the next number of the Blue and Yellow', which, a year later, animated his notorious attack upon John Wilson Croker. And in his review of Southey's Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society he criticizes his opponent's writings both in prose and verse with unsparing severity. Yet in the midst of his censure he makes the following remarkable admission: 'His poems, taken in the mass, stand far higher than his prose works. His official Odes, indeed, among which the Vision of Judgement must be classed, are, for the most part, worse than Pye's and as bad as Cibber's; nor do we think him generally happy in short pieces. But his longer poems, though full of faults, are nevertheless very extraordinary productions. We doubt greatly whether they will be read fifty years hence; but that, if they are read, they will be admired, we have no doubt whatever.' to come down to more recent times, we may cite in conclusion the favourable judgements pronounced upon Southey as a poet by men so eminent and so different from one another, as Cardinal Newman and Thomas Carlyle. The influence exercised upon the former by Thalaba is well known. 'Thalaba'. he wrote in 1850, 'has ever been to my feelings the most sublime of English poems-(I don't know Spenser)-I mean morally sublime. The versification of Thalaba is most melodious too—many persons will not perceive they are reading blank verse.' (Quoted in Lord Acton and his Circle, ed. Abbot Gasquet, O.S.B., p. xix.) Carlyle, though far from being unqualified in his praise, tells us in his Reminiscences how his early prejudice against Southey, derived from the Edinburgh Review, was overcome by the reading of his chief poems. 'It must have been a year or two later,' he says, 'when his Thalaba, Curse of Kehama, Joan of Arc, &c., came into my hands, or some one of them came, which awakened new effort for the others. I recollect the much kindlier and more respectful feeling these awoke in me, which has continued ever since. I much recognize the piety, the gentle deep affection, the reverence for God and man, which reigned in these pieces: full of soft pity, like the wailings of a mother, and yet with a clang of chivalrous valour finely audible too.' (T. Carlyle's Reminiscences, vol. ii, Appendix, p. 311 [1881].)

Each of us ought doubtless to form his own opinions on literary questions, as on others, without a slavish deference to authority, however great. But the criticisms quoted above from men so well qualified to judge may at least give us pause before we decide to condemn Southey to oblivion as no better than a laborious poetaster.

Meanwhile there can be little doubt that it is more difficult for us than it was for his contemporaries adequately to appreciate such a writer as Southey. We are under the influence of greater and very different minds. We shall not find in Southey the creative imagination, the philosophic insight, of Browning or of Tennyson. We shall miss in him the dramatic power of the one, and the mastery of diction, the curiosa felicitas, of the other. Southey plumbs no depths of thought. He soars to no heights of lyric rapture. The sensuous element is almost wholly absent from his writings. It is not his to stir the deepest feelings of our nature; and many of his poems may justly be charged with a lack of human interest. Again, his imagination is not always completely master of the materials with which it works. He can construct rather than create. His exuberant fancy leads him at times unconsciously to cross the borderland which separates what is strange and striking from what is merely strange and grotesque. diction is wanting in those 'inevitable' touches which mark the work of all really great poets. His style is apt to be diffuse; and he has a tendency to preach too obviously. But, when full allowance has been made for all defects, there remains in Southey's poetry much that is wholly admirable. He may utter no very profound message to the world; he may not see very far into the mystery of human life. But he has seen enough to inspire him to high and unfaltering action. The spirit of Christian Stoicism which animated his whole life breathes through all his writings. In them Southey has given noble expression to the power of the human will, based on religious faith, to resist evil and to rise superior to all untoward circumstance. His poetry, as all else that he wrote, reveals a firm trust in the ultimate triumph of good, a cheerful courage to endure suffering, a passion to resist all tyranny and oppression, an unshakable resolve to cleave to all that is fair and pure and true. Such a spirit is far removed from certain tendencies of modern thought. But, while it is content to leave much unexplained, it will seem to many to have laid hold upon the larger portion of the truth.

But other qualifications go to make a poet besides nobility of thought and aim; and in such qualifications Southey is not wanting. He commands a flexible and ample diction, a style which can rise and fall in accordance with its subject. His imagination is rich and powerful, if at times somewhat undisciplined. Many of his characters are finely conceived and clearly presented to the reader's mind. This is more especially true of Roderick. Indeed, there are few scenes in English poetry of a more intense dramatic feeling than that in which Florinda confesses to the guilty king, changed beyond recognition in his hermit's garb, the story of their common fall. Add to this that Southey is a master of spirited narrative; that his hoards of curious learning furnish him with a wealth of exotic and picturesque ornament and illustration; that he possesses great metrical dexterity, and a vein of real, if somewhat simple, humour; and it will easily be understood that he commands a great variety of range. Nor, in trying to form a just estimate of Southey's poetry, must we forget to take into consideration his historical importance as a factor in the development of our literature. This is perhaps generally underrated. Southey did far more than is usually recognized in breaking the fetters which had been riveted upon our poetry by the genius and authority of Pope. Cowper, Crabbe, and, still more, Burns, had already begun to teach men to admire what is simple and natural instead of worshipping exclusively a glittering and artificial perfection of form: but Southey was almost the first to strike out an entirely new line. Joan of Arc is not a good poem, but it heralded the dawn of the romantic school. Thalaba was published four years before The Lay of the Last Minstrel. At that time Southey's verse was far more widely read than that of Wordsworth or Coleridge, and he did much to make smooth the way for greater poets than himself. His English Eclogues, again, and his Monodramas-crude and uninspired as in themselves they are-furnished the rough models for some of the most striking work of Browning and of Tennyson. And in some of his Ballads his humorous treatment of mediaeval fables and his mastery of rhyme and metre are a distinct anticipation of the Ingoldsby Legends. It would be most misleading to judge of Southey's historical importance as a poet by looking solely at his reputation to-day.

One further caution must be added. All poets-even the greatesthave written a quantity of verse that is comparatively worthless. Southey himself frankly admitted that many of his shorter pieces were fit for little but the flames. But he could at least plead in excuse that he had written them under pressure of sheer necessity, in order to earn money wherewith to maintain his own family and others dependent upon his generosity. For several years he wrote verses for the Morning Post at a guinea a week; and these and other like pieces of task-work could not be expected to reach a very high level of merit. The necessity for doing such task-work to some extent spoilt Southey as a poet. But those who have learnt to know and to love him can hardly wish that it had been otherwise. For the noble selfdenial, the ceaseless industry, the unfailing cheerfulness with which he bore this burden, are among the most attractive features in his character. If Southey missed greatness as a poet, he attained it as a man: and to know him as a man is to gain immensely in appreciation of his poetry, for his character is stamped upon everything that he wrote. In this connexion let us listen to the witness of Sir Henry Taylor, himself a poet and a man of a keen critical faculty. He had been the intimate friend of Southey's later years and had known him as he was; and this is how he writes of him:-

'If he expected for himself a larger measure of attention from posterity than may now seem likely to be accorded him, it should be remembered that, though as long as his mind lasted he "lived laborious days" for the sake of his family and of others whom, in the generosity of his heart, he helped to support, yet all the labours of all the days did not enable him to do more than make preparations for the three great works which it was the object and ambition of his life to accomplish.

'Of what he did accomplish a portion will not soon be forgotten. There were greater poets in his generation, and there were men of a deeper and more far-reaching philosophic faculty; but take him for all in all—his ardent and genial piety, his moral strength, the magnitude and variety of his powers, the field which he covered in literature, and the beauty of his life—it may be said of him, justly and with no straining of the truth, that of all his contemporaries he was the greatest MAN.' (The English Poets, ed. T. H. Ward, iv, p. 164.)

It does not fall within the scope of this series to give critical estimates of the authors whose works are published in it. But it seemed worth while to say so much in order to justify the inclusion of Southey among the 'Oxford Poets'. The nature of the present volume may now be briefly explained.

of Southey's range. After the Selected Minor Poems the arrangement is that adopted by Southey in 1837-8—with the addition, as mentioned above, of the *Lines to Charles Lamb*.

The editor of Southey's poems finds himself free from one great difficulty common to editors: he is called upon to decide no question of variant readings. The text of the poems as revised by Southey himself in 1837-8 is clearly final. In reprinting that text I have made no change, apart from the correction of one or two plain misprints, and of certain obvious inadvertencies in punctuation. I have not thought it worth while to alter a few archaisms of spelling. Such forms as 'chuse', 'controul', or 'gulph', can confuse no one; and, as Southey preferred to use these forms, there seems no good reason why we should revise them for him.

It may here be noted in passing that, while Southey spared no pains in correcting his earlier poems, when once he had mastered his craft, he wrote little which he afterwards saw cause to alter. Thus Joan of Arc was practically rewritten at least three times; the second edition of Thalaba is an immense improvement on the first, and is in its turn far inferior in symmetry and polish to the final version of the poem as it appeared in 1838; and many of the early minor pieces were recast after their first publication in almost every line. On the other hand, the variations between the first and later editions of Madoc are comparatively few and unimportant, and the latest text of The Curse of Kehama and of Roderick differs scarcely at all from that originally published. In such cases as Joan of Arc and Thalaba it is not without interest to trace the alterations introduced by Southey into successive editions of the poems; but to have cumbered the present volume with an Apparatus Criticus would have been only to annoy the general reader in order to gratify the literary pedant. I have, however, reprinted Southey's Prefaces to the first nine volumes of the ten-volume edition of 1837-8, both on account of the light which they throw upon the composition of many of the poems and for their great personal interest. But the Preface to the tenth volume has been omitted, as it is wholly concerned with a discussion of criticisms directed against the Vision of Judgement-a poem which is not included in the present edition.

Southey usually printed at the beginning of his shorter pieces full quotations from the sources whence the subjects of the different poems had been drawn. In a few instances I have preserved these quotations in extenso, but for the most part, in order to save space, I have contented myself with giving the reference. I have been able in many cases to give the date and place of the first publication of particular poems, but I have

not attempted to do so in all. Probably it would not be possible to attain completeness in this respect; nor would any important object be served by doing so. But I have endeavoured to trace the first publication of all the more notable of the shorter pieces; and I regret that in one or two such instances my search has not met with success. For all those notes which are enclosed in square brackets at the beginning of particular poems I am responsible. The date appended at the foot of any poem is that of its original composition, as printed by Southey in 1837–8.

Southey published with his poems an immense mass of illustrative notes, consisting for the most part of extracts from different authors collected in the course of his wide and varied reading. These notes are full of curious information, but are not always particularly relevant to the poems to which they are attached. From considerations of space they have been almost entirely omitted in the present edition. Some of them, however, will be found quoted—in whole or in part—in the Notes at the end of this volume; the substance of a few others is given in an abridged paraphrase. The letter (S.) after any Note shows that either its actual words or its substance may be found in Southey's note on the passage in question; and in the case of actual quotation the words quoted are marked by inverted commas.

For those Notes which are not followed by the letter (S.) I am responsible. As has been explained above, no textual questions can arise in connexion with Southey's poetry. I have therefore confined myself to inserting a few Notes in order to explain various allusions, to give information as to the composition and publication of certain poems, or to add a touch of personal or critical interest connected with them. In so doing I can hardly hope to escape the charge of having on occasion either inserted or omitted too much. But I trust that, in spite of mistakes, my object has been in great measure attained.

The Chronological Table of Southey's life on pp. xxi-xxviii may perhaps be found useful. In preparing it I have been much indebted to a similar Table in Mr. T. Hutchinson's edition of Wordsworth in the present series.

Of the imperfections of this edition of Southey's Poems I am very sensible. They may be explained in part by the fact that I have been obliged to prepare it at a distance from libraries and in the occasional intervals of other and very different work. Under these circumstances I am the more grateful to those friends without whose help my task could hardly have been completed. In particular my thanks are due to the Reverend Canon Rawnsley for kindly allowing me to see his Southey MSS.; to Miss Geraldine Fitz-Gerald for the work that she has done on my behalf at the British Museum,

and also for her help in reading through some of the proofs; and to Mr. E. H. Coleridge for his great kindness in answering my requests for information on various points and in making many useful suggestions. But above all I desire to express my gratitude to Professor Dowden. In preparing this edition I have received from him most generous help in counsel and encouragement. But I owe him a debt of far longer standing; for it was he who, by his delightful volume in the 'English Men of Letters' series, first taught me to know and to love Robert Southey.

M. H. F. G.

CONTENTS

Elementa Dana, an						211
EDITOR'S PREFACE	•	•	•	•		iii
LIST OF AUTHORITIES, &c	•	•				
BIOGRAPHICAL TABLE						xxi
SOUTHBY'S PREFACES TO THE COLLECTE	υЕ	DITION	IN	TEN	VOLUMES.	
PUBLISHED IN 1837 AND 1838						. 1
THALABA THE DESTROYER .						. 23
Preface	•	•	•	•	•	23
Book I	•	•	•	•	•	. 23
	•	•	•	•	•	33
Book II	:	•	:			. 39
Book IV	·	:	÷			47
Book V						. 57
Book VI						. 65
Book VII						. 71
Book VIII					•	. 78
Book IX		•			•	. 85
Book X					•	. 93
Book XI						. 101
Book XII					•	. 108
THE CURSE OF KEHAMA						. 117
I. The Funeral	•	•	•	•	•	. 118
II. The Curse	•	•	•	•	•	. 121
III. The Recovery	•	•	•	•	•	. 124
IV. The Departure	•	•	•			. 126
V. The Separation	•	•	:	:	•	. 129
VI. Casyapa	·	·	·			. 133
VII. The Swerga	•	•	•		•	. 136
VIII. The Sacritice	·	•	·	·		. 141
IX. The Home-Scene	·		·		•	. 144
X. Mount Meru		•	·		•	. 148
XI. The Enchantress	·				-	. 153
XII. The Sacritice Completed .	·	-	·			. 158
XIII. The Retreat					·	. 160
XIV. Jaga-Naut						. 165
XV. The City of Baly						. 169
XVI. The Ancient Sepulchres .	·	•			•	. 173
XVII. Baly	•	•	•	•	•	. 179
XVIII. Kehama's Descent	•	•	•	•	•	. 182
XIX. Mount Calasay	•	•	•	•	•	. 184
XX. The Embarkation	•	•	•	•	•	. 188
XXI. The World's End	•	•	•	•	•	. 190
XXII. The Gate of Padalon .	•	•	•	•	•	193
XXIII. Padalon	•	•	•	•		197
XXIV. The Amreeta	:		•	•		. 202

								PAGE
RODERICK, THE LAST		GOTI	IS					. 208
I. Roderick and	Romano							. 209
II. Roderick in Sc	olitude							. 215
III. Adosinda.								. 220
IV. The Monastery	of St. Fe	elix	-	·	•		•	. 227
V. Roderick and	Siverian			•	:	:	•	. 233
VI. Roderick in T		•		•	•	•	•	. 240
VII. Roderick and		•	•	•	•	•	•	
VIII. Alphonso.	1 Clay C	•		•	•	•		~
VIII. Alphonso. IX. Florinda. X. Roderick and	•	•		•	•	•		
Y Dodoriel and	Florinda	•	•	•	•	•		0 = 4
VI Count Dadas's	Codle	•	•	•	•	•		
XI. Count Pedro's	Castio	•	•	•	•	•		. 261
All. The vow.	•	•	•	•	•	•		. 265
XIII. Count Eudon		•	•	•	•	•		. 269
XIV. The Rescue	•	•	•		•	•	•	. 274
XV. Roderick at C	angas .	•		•		•	•	. 277
XI. Count Pedro's XII. The Vow. XIII. Count Eudon XIV. The Rescue XV. Roderick at C XVI. Covadonga XVII. Roderick and XVIII. The Acclamati XIX. Roderick and XX. The Moorish C XXI The Fountain					•	•	•	. 282
XVII. Roderick and	Siverian	•		•				. 288
XVIII. The Acclamati	on .				:			. 293
XVIII. The Acclamati XIX. Roderick and	Rusilla			•				. 299
XX. The Moorish C	camp .							. 302
XXI. The Fountain	in the For	rest						. 307
XXII. The Moorish (Council							. 316
XXIII. The Vale of C	ovadonga			-			-	. 320
XXIV. Roderick and	Count Jul	ian					-	326
XXV Roderick in B	attle		•	•	•	•	•	. 331
XVIII. The Acclamati XIX. Roderick and XX. The Moorish (XXI. The Fountain XXII. The Moorish (XXIII. The Vale of C XXIV. Roderick and XXV. Roderick in B SELECTED MINOR POET The Holly Tree		•	•	•	•	•	•	. 001
SELECTED MINOR POE	MS .		_	•	_			. 343
The Holly Tree		•	•	•	•	•	•	343
The Holly Tree . The Dead Friend	• •	•	•	•	•	•	•	
		•	•	•	•	•		344
To Mary Funeral Song, for the	Dringer (u. Usanlai	·	Waln		•	•	. 345
4 Mrs. Davis among the	Dand and	Dant	10 01	vi ale	9	•	•	. 347
'My Days among the Imitated from the Per	Dead are	Last	•	•	•	•	•	
Imitated from the Per	sian .	•	•	•	•	•	•	. 347
The Cataract of Lodor	е.	•	•	•	•	•	•	. 348
S								
Sonnets:—								0.40
1. The Evening Rainbe	ow .	•	•	•	•	•	•	. 349
2. Winter		•	•	•	•	•	•	. 350
Inscriptions :—								_
1. In a Forest .		•		•		•		. 350
2. Epitaph			•			•		. 350
3. At Barrosa .								. 351
1. In a Forest . 2. Epitaph 3. At Barrosa . 4. Epitaph. I .				•				352
5. Epitaph. II .		Ī						352
Dedication of the Author	or's Collou	nies o	n the	Progr	ess at	d Pro	anects	
							Pooli	353
Tittle Rook in Cross	and Gold?	•	•	•	•	•		. 356
of Society Little Book, in Green a Lines written in the A	mu dolu Bum of 13	othe	Ossili:	· non	•	•	•	. 350 . 357
Ode written Justin the A	Nogotict	iona -	wann Wann		00.040	in T-	· nucre	
Ode, written during the	-			-			•	0~7
1814		•	•	•				357

SELECTED MINOR POEMS (continued)—				
BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES:-				PAGE
The March to Moscow				. 360
Lord William				. 362
The Well of St. Keyne		: :	•	. 364
The Battle of Blenneim			•	. 365
The Old Woman of Berkeley				. 366
God's Judgement on a Wicked Bishop.	•		•	370
The Incheape Rock		: :	•	372
Queen Orraca and the Five Martyrs of Mo	orocco		•	. 374
Brough Bells		: :	•	376
Inscription for a Coffee-Pot			•	. 378
SONNETS		•	·	
	•	• •	•	. 379
LYRIC POEMS	•		•	. 383
To Contemplation	•		•	. 383
To Contemplation Remembrance The Widow The Traveller's Return The Old Man's Comforts To a Spider The Ebb Tide			•	. 384
The Widow			•	. 385
The Traveller's Return	•			. 385
The Old Man's Comforts	•			. 385
To a Spider	•		•	. 386
			•	. 387
The Complaints of the Poor	·		•	. 387
To a Friend inquiring if I would live over my	Youth	again .	•	. 388
OCCACIONAL DIECTO				000
OCCASIONAL PIECES	•	• •	•	. 389
On a Landscape of Gaspar Poussin .	•	• •	•	. 389
Written on Christmas Day, 1795 .			•	. 390
Written after visiting the Convent of Arra	abida		•	. 391
On my own Miniature Picture Recollections of a Day's Journey in Spain		•	•	. 392
Recollections of a Day's Journey in Spain	ı .	• •	•	. 393
To Margaret Hill	•		•	. 394
History .	; .	·		. 395
Written immediately after reading the Spe	eech of	Kobert	Emmet	. 396
Verses spoken in the Theatre at Oxford,	upon the	he Insi	allation o	i oo=
Lord Grenville	•		•	. 397
Thanksgiving for Victory Stanzas written in Lady Lonsdale's Albun Stanzas addressed to W. R. Turner, Esq.,			•	. 399
Stanzas written in Lady Lonsdale's Albun	n		•	. 399
Stanzas addressed to W. R. Turner, Esq.,	K.A.		•	. 400
On a Picture by J. M. Wright, Esq	•		•	. 401
To Charles Lamb	•		•	. 402
THE RETROSPECT			•	. 403
HYMN TO THE PENATES	_		•	. 406
	•	•		
ENGLISH ECLOGUES			•	. 411
The Old Mansion House			•	. 411
Hannah	•	: :	•	. 414
The Ruined Cottage			•	. 415
The Alderman's Funeral			•	. 417
THE DEVIL'S WALK				420

							PAGE
INSCRIPTIONS		•			•		. 426
For a Column at Newbury .	<u>.</u> .	• .	•	•			. 426
For a Cavern that overlooks the	River	Avor	1	•	•	•	. 426
For a Tablet at Silbury-Hill	•	•	•	•	•	•	. 427
For a Monument in the New For		•	•	:	•		427
For a Tablet on the Banks of a		n	•	•	•	•	. 427
For the Cenotaph at Ermenonvill	е	•	•	•	•		. 428
For a Monument at Oxford.	÷ .	•	•	•	•		. 428
For a Monument in the Vale of	Ewias	•	•	•	•		428
Epitaph on Algernon Sidney	•	•	•	•	•		429
Epitaph on King John	•	•	•	•	•	•	429
For a Monument at Tordesillas	•	•	•	•	•		. 429
For a Column at Truxillo .	·~ .	٠,	•	•	<u>.</u> .	•	. 430
For the Cell of Honorius, at the	Cork	Conv	ent,	near	Cintra	•	. 430
For a Monument at Taunton	•	•	•	•	•	•	430
For a Tablet at Penshurst .	•	•	•	•	•	•	. 431
Epitaph	•	•	•	•	•		431
For a Monument at Rolissa.	•	•	•	•	•		432
For a Monument at Vimeiro	•	•	•	•	•		432
At Coruña	•	•	•	•	•		433
Epitaph	•	•	•	•	•		
To the Memory of Paul Burrard	•	•	•	•	•		434
For the Banks of the Douro	•	•	•	•	•		435
Talavera. For the Field of Battle	Э	•	•	•	•		436
For the Deserto de Busaco .	•	•	,	•	•		407
For the Lines of Torres Vedras	•	•	•	•	•		400
At Santarem	•		•	•	•		438
At Fuentes D'Onoro	•	•	,	•	•		438
At Fuentes D'Onoro . For a Monument at Albuhera To the Memory of Sir William M	•	•	,	•	•		438 439
To the Memory of Sir William M	yers .		,	•	•	• •	
For the Walls of Ciudad Rodrigo		·		•	•	• •	440 440
To the Memory of Major General	Mack	unon	l.	•	•		441
For the Affair at Arroyo Molinos Written in an Unpublished Volume	T		0	1		1h - mla a	441
	or L	etters,	αс.,	ру 1	sarre c	naries	442
	•			•	•		443
	•			•	•		440
Inscriptions for the Caledonian		L:—					
I. At Clachnacharry		. ,		•	•		443
II. At Fort Augustus				•	•		
III. At Banavie Epitaph in Butleigh Church . Epitaph				•	•		
Epitaph in Butleigh Church.			٠.	•	•		445
Epitaph				•	•		446
CARMEN TRIUMPHALE For the Co	mmen	cemer	t of	the '	Year 1	814 .	447
EPISTLE TO ALLAN CUNNINGHA	М.				•		453
MADOC							460
Dedication	• •	•		•	•	•	460
Preface	• •	•		•	•	• •	460
MADOC IN WALES: PART I	• •	•		•	•	•	461
I. The Return to Wales		•		•	•		461 461
II. The Marriage Feast.		•		•	•		464
11. The marriage reast.				•	•		404

CONTENTS	

MADOC (continued)—						1	AGE
III. Cadwallon		•					467
IV. The Voyage					•		472
V. Lincoya							475
VI. Erillyab							479
							483
VIII. The Peace							486
IX. Emma							
X. Mathraval							493
XI. The Gorsedd			•				496
XII. Dinevawr		•				•	499
XIII. Llewelyn		•	•	•	•	•	502
XIV. Llaian	•	•			•	•	506
XV. The Excommunication .	•	•	•	•	•	•	510
XVI. David			•		•		
XVII. The Departure			•	•	•		516
XVIII. Rodri			•	•	•		520
MADOC IN AZTLAN: PART II							521
I. The Return to Aztlan .							
II. The Tidings			•			•	
II. The Tidings III. Neolin					•		× 0.07
IV. Amalahta		•	•				
				•			532
V. War Denounced VI. The Festival of the Dead			•				534
VII. The Snake God							
VIII. The Conversion of the Hoan	nen						
IX. Tlalala							545
X. The Arrival of the Gods	·	•	•				549
XI. The Capture XII. Hoel XIII. Coatel	•						
XII. Hoel							555
XIII. Coatel							558
XIV. The Stone of Sacrifice .							560
XV. The Battle							566
XVI. The Women							568
XVI. The Women XVII. The Deliverance							573
XVIII. The Victory					•		577
XIX. The Funeral							581
XX. The Death of Coatel .					• .		584
XXI. The Sports XXII. The Death of Lincoya .							586
XXII. The Death of Lincova .							588
XXIII. Caradoc and Senena .							590
AAIV. ING EMBRISSV							592
XXIV. The Embassy XXV. The Lake Fight							594
XXVI. The Close of the Century					•		596
XXVII. The Migration of the Azteca	8.						602
1111 1111 1111 1111 1111 1111 1111	-						
BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES.					_		609
Mary, the Maid of the Inn	•	•	•	•			609
	•	•	·	•	•		611
Ponica	•	•	•	•	•	:	612
Jaspar	•	•	:	•	:		614
St. Patrick's Purgatory	•	•	•	•	•		616
The Cross Roads	•	•	:	•			619
THE CLOSS MORED	•	•	•	•		-	

BALLADS AND				TALE	S (ca	ntinue	(d)—			•	1	PAGE
The Pious I			•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	621
St. Michael's			•		•			•	•	•		623
King Henry	V ar	nd th	е Н	lermit	of I)reux				•		624
Cornelius Ag	grippe	L										625
St. Romuald	1											626
											•	627
The Rose The Lover's	Rock	T					·		•	·	•	629
Garci Ferrar	ndez	•	•	•	:	•	•	•	•	•	÷	630
Bishop Brun			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		632
A True Balla	'9 °t (34 A.,			, Da	a and	l tha :	Douil	•	•	•	633
			iuu.	ius, one	3 1 0	o, and	t the .	Devii	•	•	•	635
Henry the I		.t	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
St. Gualbert	0	•	:	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	636
Queen Mary	s Chi	risten	ıng	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	642
Roprecht the	e Rob	bber	•		•	•	•	•			•	644
The Young	Drage	on										650
Epilogue to	the !	Young	D	ragon								655
				O								
A TALE OF PA	\mathbf{RAG}	UAY										657
Preface												657
Dedication						•	-	•			·	657
D		•	•	•	•	·	•	·	•	•	•	659
Canto I	•	•	:	•	•		•		•	•	•	660
Canto II	•				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	668
Canto III	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	678
Canto IV	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	686
THE POET'S P	TLGF	RTMA	GE	TO U	VAT	ERLO	0					698
**			~1	1 0 .			· .	•	•	•	•	698
		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
PART I. THE				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	701
I. Flander				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	701
II. Brussels III. The Fie	3	•	•	•								706
III. The Fie	ld of	Batt	le									708
IV. The Sce	ne of	War										715
						•	•		•	•		720
PART II. THE	V 151	UN .	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
I. The Tow II. The Evi III. The Sact	er .	٠	,	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	720
II. The Evi	l Pro	phet	• .	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	725
III. The Sacr	red M	lount	ain			•		•				727
IV. The Hop	pes of	Man		•		•	•		•			733
MISCELLANEOU Fragmentary Imagination Additional F	Thouand I	ights, Realit	occ	asione	d by	the I	cath	of the	Autl	hor's b	Son	740 740 741 741
	-						•	•	•	•	•	•
APPENDIX. L	ist of	F Poe	MS	NOT R	EPRI	NTED	IN TH	E PRI	esent	EDIT	ION	743
NOTES .					•	•					•	746
INDEX OF FIR	est t	INES	1									765

LIST OF AUTHORITIES

THE list of books given below makes no pretence to being a complete bibliography. It is intended to refer the reader to (a) the principal authorities for Southey's life: and (b) a few books and essays which are of special interest from their bearing upon Southey's character and writings.

(a) AUTHORITIES

1. The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey. Edited by his son, the Rev. C. C. Southey, 6 vols., 1849-50.

2. Sclections from the Letters of Robert Southey. Edited by J. W. Warter,

4 vols., 1856.

3. The Correspondence of Robert Southey with Caroline Bowles. Edited by

E. Dowden, 1881.

4. Letters from the Lake Poets—Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Robert Southey—to Daniel Stuart, editor of The Morning Post and The Courier, 1800-38. Printed for private circulation, 1889.

5. The Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Edited by E. H. Coleridge, 2 vols.,

1895.

6. Reminiscences of S. T. Coleridge and R. Southey. By Joseph Cottle, 1847. [A recast of Cottle's Early Recollections (1837) with additions.]

7. The Life and Writings of William Taylor of Norwich. By J. W. Robberds, 2 vols., 1843.

8. The Life of W. S. Landor. By John Forster, 2 vols., 1869 (reprinted in

vol. i of Landor's Works and Life, 1876).

9. The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb. Edited by E. V. Lucas, 1903-5, vols. vi and vii, (containing C. Lamb's Correspondence).

(b) MISCELLANEOUS

1. Southey. By E. Dowden ('English Men of Letters' series), 1879.

2. The Literary Associations of the English Lakes. By the Rev. Canon H. D. Rawnsley, vol. i, 1894.

3. De Quincey's Recollections of the Lake Poets, and Autobiography.

4. Hazlitt's Spirit of the Age.

5. The Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of H. Crabb Robinson. Edited by T. Sadler, 3 vols., 1869.

6. T. Carlyle's Reminiscences, vol. ii, Appendix, pp. 309-29, 1881.

7. Robert Southey: an essay by Sir Henry Taylor in The English Poets (ed. T. H. Ward), vol. iv, pp. 155-64, 1880.

T. H. Ward), vol. iv, pp. 155-64, 1880.
8. Poems by Robert Southey. Edited, with an Introduction, by E. Dowden

('Golden Treasury' series), 1895.

9. Selections from the Poems of Robert Southey. Edited with a biographical and critical Introduction, by Sidney R. Thompson ('Canterbury Poets'), 1888.

BIOGRAPHICAL TABLE

CONTAINING THE CHIEF EVENTS OF SOUTHEY'S LIFE AND SOME IMPORTANT DATES IN THE LIVES OF CONTEMPORARY WRITERS

S. = Robert Southey, the Poet. Thomas, &c. S. = Thomas, &c. Southey. S. T. C. = Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

A.D.	ÆT.	1
1735		About this year Thomas Southey, son of a yeoman farmer of Wellington
		in Somerset, settles on a farm at Holford, a village in the Quantock
		Hills.
1754		[George Crabbe born.]
1762		[William Lisle Bowles born.]
1763	_	[Samuel Rogers born.]
1764		The Traveller (O. Goldsmith).]
1765	_	[Percy's Reliques.]
1770		[William Wordsworth born. James Hogg born. Chatterton died.
		The Deserted Village (Goldsmith).]
1771	_	[Gray died. Scott born. The Minstrel (Beattie).]
1772	-	Robert Southey, a linen-draper at Bristol, (born 1745, second son of
		Thomas S.), married Margaret Hill. To them were born nine children,
		five of whom died young. The surviving children were Robert,
		Thomas, Henry Herbert, and Edward. [S. T. Coleridge born.]
1774		ROBERT SOUTHEY born at Bristol, August 12, his parents' second and
		eldest surviving child.
1775	1	[Charles Lamb born. W. Savage Landor born.]
1776	2	During 1776-80 S. spends most of his time with his mother's half-
		sister, Miss Tyler, at Bath.
1777	3	Thomas S. born. [H. Hallam born. Thomas Campbell born.]
1778	4	[W. Hazlitt born.]
1779	5	
1780	6	
1781	7	S. removed to a school at Corston, nine miles from Bristol. [The
		Library (Crabbe).]
1782	8	
		by a Mr. Williams, spending his holidays in general with Miss Tyler.
	'	From 1778 onwards Miss Tyler regularly takes him to the theatre.
		He reads Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher before he is
		eight years old. He also reads The Faerie Queene about this time.
		[Cowper's first volume of <i>Poems</i> .]
1783	9	
1		Epics on the Trojan Brutus, Egbert, &c. [The Village (Crabbe).]
1784	10	[Dr. Johnson died. Leigh Hunt born.]
1785	11	[De Quincey born. Thomas Love Peacock born. Henry Kirke
	l	White born. The Task (Cowper).]

XXII		BIOGRAPHICAL TABLE
A.D.	ÆT.	
1786	12	At the end of this year or early in 1787 S. sent as a day-boy to a Mr. Lewis, a clergyman in Bristol, who took pupils. [Poems (Robert Burns, Kilmarnock ed.). Caroline Bowles born.]
1788	14	C. W. W. Wynn, subsequently Secretary at War and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and G. C. Bedford. [Byron born.]
1789	15	[Sonnets (W. L. Bowles). The Loves of the Plants (Darwin).]
1790	16	[Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution.]
1791	17	[John Wesley died.]
1792	18	S. expelled from Westminster for writing an article in a school newspaper, The Flagellant, ascribing the invention of flogging to the devil. He returns to Miss Tyler at Bristol. His father fails in business, and dies just after S., having been refused admission at Christ Church on account of the expulsion from Westminster, has matriculated at Balliol College. [Shelley born. Keble born. Pleasures of Memory (Rogers).]
1793	19	S. goes into residence at Balliol (Jan.), his expenses (as at Westminster) being paid by his uncle, the Rev. Herbert Hill, Chaplain to the British Factory at Lisbon. Reads and is much influenced by Epictetus. Friendship with Edmund Seward. S. writes first draft of Joan of Arc in Long Vacation. Shocked by the fate of the Girondins, and especially by the execution of Brissot (Oct. 31). Begins to think of retiring to America, there to live an Arcadian life in the forest. [Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches (Wordsworth). Tam o'Shanter, &c. (Burns). Felicia Hemans born.]
1794	20	
1795	21	S. introduced to C. Lamb by S. T. C. (Jan.). S. and S. T. C. lecture at Bristol. Death of Edmund Seward (June). S. definitely declines Mr. Hill's proposal that he should take Orders, and decides to read for the bar. Abandons Pantisocracy, thereby causing a breach with S. T. C. Marries Edith Fricker, Nov. 14, and immediately after the wedding starts with Mr. Hill for Lisbon, leaving Mrs. S. in the care of Cottle's sisters. The marriage for the time kept secret. S. T. C. marries Sarah Fricker (Oct. 4). [Keats born. T. Carlyle born.]
1796	22	Joan of Arc published by Joseph Cottle. S. returns from Lisbon in May and settles with his wife at Bristol. Partial reconciliation with S. T. C. Death of S.'s brother-in-law, Lovell. S. writing Letters from Spain and Portugal and contributing also to The Monthly Magazine. Reads William Taylor's translations from German writers.
		[Burns died. Hartley Coleridge born. Poems, 1st ed., S. T. C.]

A.D.	ÆT.	
1797	23	Letters from Spain and Portugal and Poems published. S. in London
	ļ	and at Burton (near Christchurch in Hampshire) studying law.
		Becomes acquainted with J. Rickman, afterwards one of his closest
	l	friends. C. Lamb visits S. at Burton. S. receives an annuity of
]	£160 from C. W. W. Wynn.
1800		
1798	24	
		continues to do up to 1803. Visits Norwich, where he makes acquain-
		tance with William Taylor and Dr. Sayers. Settles at Westbury, two
	}	miles from Bristol (June). In constant intercourse with Humphry
	1	Davy. Editing first vol. of The Annual Anthology. Second ed. of
	1	Davy. Editing first vol. of the Annual Annually. Second ed. of
		Joan of Arc. S. in indifferent health at end of this year.
		[Lyrical Ballads (Coleridge and Wordsworth). Gebir (W. S. Lan-
		(dor).]
1799	25	Westbury; London; Burton. Madoc finished (July 11). Thalaba
		begun (July 12). More complete reconciliation with S. T. C. (Aug.).
		S. and his wife visit the Coleridges at Nether Stowey. Walking tour
		with S. T. C. in Devonshire. First volume of The Annual Anthology
		and second volume of <i>Poems</i> published. S. reads and greatly admires
		Gebir. His health still unsatisfactory.
		[T. Hood born. Pleasures of Hope (Campbell).]
1800	26	S. collaborates with J. Cottle in preparing an edition of Chatterton's
		Works for the benefit of the latter's sister. Leaves England for
		Portugal with Mrs. S. for the benefit of his health (April). Thalaba
		Similar (Table) Chairman But material for W.
		finished (July). S. begins to collect materials for a History of Portugal.
		S. T. C. settles at Greta Hall, Keswick (Aug.). Second volume of
		The Annual Anthology published.
		[Cowper died. Macaulay born. Henry Taylor born.]
1801	27	Thalaba published. Curse of Kehama begun (May). S. returns to
		England (June). Completely abandons all idea of adopting the law
		as a profession. Begins to review again, a task-work from which he
		is unable to free himself for the rest of his active life. Stays with
		S. T. C. at Keswick (Sept.). Accepts post of private secretary to
		Mr. Corry, Chancellor of the Exchequer for Ireland.
İ		[Lyrical Ballads, 2nd ed. (pub. Jan.). Poems ('Thos. Little').
		Tales of Wonder (M. G. Lewis).]
1802	28	Death of S.'s mother (Jan.). S. resigns his post as secretary. At
		Bristol (May). Birth of his first child, Margaret (Sept.). S. trans-
		lating Amadis of Gaul, writing portions of a History of Portugal,
		lating Amades of Gaut, withing portions of a History of I ortugat,
		reviewing, and continuing Curse of Kehama. Chatterton's Works
		(ed. Southey and Cottle) published by subscription. Peace of Amiens.
		This of critical importance in the development of S.'s political opinions.
		'It restored in me the English feeling which had been deadened; it
		placed me in sympathy with my country, bringing me thus into that
		natural and healthy state of mind upon which time, and knowledge,
j		and reflection were sure to produce their proper and salutary effect.
		(Warter, iii, 320.)
		[Erasmus Darwin died.]
1803	29	Bristol. Amadis of Gaul published. Death of Margaret S. (Aug.).
		S. and his wife go to stay with S. T. C. at Keswick (Sept.).
1804	30	Keswick. S. T. C. starts for Malta (April 2). Edith May S. born
1002	00	(May 1). S. finally correcting Madoc for the press. Letters from
		England he Don Manuel Farmiella hourn
- 1	. 19	England by Don Manuel Espriella begun.

XXIV	′	DIOGRAFIIIOAD TADDE
A.D. 1805	ÆТ. 31	Madoc and Metrical Tales and Other Poems published. S. visits Scotland, and stays with Sir W. Scott at Ashestiel (Oct.). Plans to go to Lisbon for two years in the following spring. [Lay of the Last Minstrel (Scott). The Prelude finished (Wordsworth).]
1806	32	Curse of Kehama resumed. S. visits William Taylor at Norwich (April). Hopes to be given the Secretaryship of the Legation at Lisbon. S. T. C. returns to England (Aug.). Chronicle of the Cid and Palmerin of England begun. Herbert S. born (Oct. 11). S. undertakes to edit Henry Kirke White's Remains gratuitously for the White family. [Simonidea (Landor). Odes and Epistles (T. Moore). Elizabeth
1807	33	Barrett born.] Wynn obtains for S. a pension from Government of £144 net per annum, and S. therefore resigns the annuity of £160 paid him by Wynn since 1797. S. declines Scott's suggestion that he should contribute to the Edinburgh Review, on the ground of his complete disagreement with its principles. Decides to settle permanently at Greta Hall. Palmerin of England, Letters from England by Don Manuel Espriella, Remains of Henry Kirke White, and Specimens of the later English Poets (edited in conjunction with G. C. Bedford) published. Madoc, 2nd ed. S. begins to write the History of Brazil as the first part of his projected History of Portugal. Plans an edition of the Morte d'Arthur. [Poems in Two Volumes (Wordsworth). The Parish Register
1808	34	(Crabbe). Hours of Idleness (Byron).] Emma S. born (Feb.). S. meets W. S. Landor for the first time at Bristol. Landor urges him to continue his mythological poems, and offers to pay for the printing. Stung by this generous offer, S. resumes The Curse of Kehama, though without thought of accepting Landor's proposal. Prophesies that Spain will eventually prove Buonaparte's destruction. Plans a poem on Pelayo. S. T. C. domesticated with Wordsworth at Allan Bank, Grasmore (Sept.). The Quarterly Review planned. S. writes an article on the Baptist Mission in India for the first number, published Feb. 1809. Chronicle of the Cid published. [Marmion (Scott).]
1809	35	Bertha S. born (March 27), Emma S. died (May). S. T. C. publishes first number of The Friend at Penrith (June 1). S. takes a lease of Greta Hall for twenty-one years. Continues History of Brazil. Corresponds with Ebenezer Elliott, who asks him to criticize his poems. Undertakes to write the historical part of Ballantyne's new Edinburgh Annual Register at a salary of £400 a year. Finishes Curse of Kehama. Plans a poem on Robin Hood. Roderick begun (Dec. 2). Thalaba, 2nd ed. [Tract on the Convention of Cintra (Wordsworth). English Bards and Scotch Reviewers (Byron). Gertrude of Wyoming (Campbell).
1810	36	A. Tennyson, Charles Darwin, and W. E. Gladstone born.]
1.0		[2.10 20. Cong. (Samuely, 2.100 2009 of the Lane (Scott).]

- 70	ÆT.	1
1811	37	S. plans Oliver Newman and The Book of the Church. At work on Life of Nelson, an expansion of an article in the fifth number of the Quarterly Review. Visits Landor at Llanthony (July?). Shelley at Keswick, winter of 1811-12. S. writes an article in the Quarterly (Oct.) on the Bell and Lancaster system of Education, advocating the establishment in every parish of a national school. This article subsequently enlarged and published separately. Curse of Kehama, 2nd ed. [Thackeray born. Don Roderick (Scott).]
1812	38	S. T. C. at Greta Hall, Feb. 23 - March 26,—his last visit to the Lake Country. Isabel S. born (Nov.). Dr. Bell at Keswick. Omniana published. [Charles Dickens and Robert Browning born. Tales in Verse (Crabbe). Count Julian (Landor). Childe Harolde, Cantos i and ii (Byron). Rejected Addresses (J. and H. Smith).
1813	39	S. ceases to write for the Edinburgh Annual Register owing to irregularity of payment. Visits Streatham and London (Sept.). Meets Lord Byron at Holland House. Appointed Poet Laureate (partly on Scott's recommendation) on Scott declining the office (Oct.). Life of Nelson published. The Doctor begun. Ode Written during Negotiations with Buonaparte. [Rokeby; The Bridal of Triermain (Scott). Remorse (S. T. C.) performed at Drury Lane (Jan.).]
1814	40	S. endeavours, through Cottle, to induce S. T. C. to return to Greta Hall (April). Failing even to get an answer from S. T. C. to his letters, he gets up a subscription among friends and relations to pay Hartley C.'s college expenses (autumn). Begins correspondence with Bernard Barton. Roderick published. S. appointed Member of the Royal Academy of Madrid. A Tale of Paraguay begun. [The Excursion (Wordsworth). The Feast of the Poets (Leigh Hunt).]
1815	41	Oliver Newman begun. Minor Poems (rearranged, &c.) published 3 vols. Roderick, 2nd ed. Tour in Holland and Belgium with Mrs. and Edith S. and Edward Nash, the artist (SeptOct.). [First collective ed. of Wordsworth's poems published. The White Doe of Rylstone (Wordsworth). The Lord of the Isles (Scott).]
1816	42	Death of Herbert S. (April 17),—a blow from which S. never recovers. The Poet's Pilgrimage and The Lay of the Laureate published. An endeavour made by the Ministry to induce S. to conduct a political journal in London in opposition to revolutionary principles. This proposal S. declines. At this time S. advocates as palliatives of social distress the establishment of savings banks and a national system of education, the colonization of waste lands in the British Isles, and the encouragement of emigration. [Alastor (Shelley). Christabel (S. T. C.). The Story of Rimini (Leigh Hunt). Childe Harold, Canto iii (Byron).]
1817	43	Wat Tyler surreptitiously published (spring). S., in consequence, attacked by William Smith, member for Norwich, in House of Commons as 'a renegado' (March 14). Replies in a letter to The Courier (reprinted in his Essays), and is defended in that paper by S. T. C. Declines a proposal that he should write chief leading article in The Times, (and, apparently, act in some measure as editor), at a salary of £2,000 a year, together with a share in the profits. Tour through

	-	
A.D.	ÆT	The state of the s
		Switzerland to Italian Lakes and back through Black Forest, Cologne,
	1	and Brussels (May-Aug.). Life of Wesley begun. Morte d'Arthur
	1	and History of Brazil, vol. ii, published.
	1	[Sibylline Leaves; Biographia Literaria (S. T. C.). Poems (Keats).
	1	Lalla Rookh (Moore). Harold the Dauntless (Scott). The Whistle-
	1	
	1	craft Poem (J. H. Frere).]
1818	44	
	1	Edinburgh. Caroline Bowles writes to him (April 25) to ask his
	1	opinion of a MS. poem, thus beginning a correspondence continued
		without interruption until their marriage in 1839.
	1	[Childe Harold, Canto iv (Byron). Revolt of Islam (Shelley). Poems
	1	(C. Lamb, in his collected Works). Foliage (Leigh Hunt). En-
	1	dymion (Keats).]
1819	45	
1010	10	(autumn). History of Brazil, vol. iii, published. S. learns from
	1	Wynn of the existence of the Dedication of Don Juan.
	1	wynn of the existence of the Dedication of Don June.
	1	Peter Bell and The Waggoner (Wordsworth). Don Juan, Canto i,
		&c. (Byron). Tales of the Hall (Crabbe). Dramatic Scenes (Procter).
	1	Poems, Rosalind and Helen, The Euganean Hills, Hymn to Intel-
	1	lectual Beauty, The Cenci (Shelley). J. Ruskin, A. H. Clough,
	1	and Charles Kingsley born.]
1820	46	
	1	In Wales and London (April, May, and June). Meets Caroline Bowles
	1	for the first time at Chelsea. D.C.L., Oxford Univ. (June 14). Life
	ı	of Wesley published.
	1	[The River Duddon; A Series of Sonnets (Wordsworth). Lamia,
		Isabella, Hyperion, &c. (Keats). Prometheus Bound (Shelley).
	1	Ellen Fitzarthur (Caroline Bowles).]
1821	47	Vision of Judgement published. Its Preface involves S. in a public
		controversy with Byron. Hearing that his friend John May has lost
		his fortune, S. makes over to him his entire savings, amounting to
		£625. Expedition of Orsua published.
		[Keats died. Adonais (Shelley). Cain, &c. (Byron).]
1822	48	History of the Peninsular War, vol. i, published.
1022	40	
		[Ecclesiastical Sketches (Wordsworth), Hellas (Shelley). The
	40	Widow's Tale (Caroline Bowles). Shelley drowned.]
1823	49	Caroline Bowles at Greta Hall (Sept.). S. writes to her (Nov. 4) to
- 1		suggest that they should collaborate in a poem on Robin Hood.
j		Visits London (Nov.). Renews his friendship with C. Lamb, which
1		had been momentarily interrupted through the latter misunder-
- 1	.	standing a reference by S. in the Quarterly to the Essays of Elia.
1		[The Loves of the Angels (T. Moore). Essays of Elia (Lamb).]
1824	50	Robin Hood begun. The Book of the Church and History of the Penin-
		sular War, vol. ii, published.
1	' I	[Byron died. Imaginary Conversations, vols. i and ii (Landor).]
1825	51	Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae heavy - an anguar to C Rutlan's month
1020	31	Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae begun,—an answer to C. Butler's reply to The Book of the Church. S. now, as always, strongly opposed to
}	1	
1	- 1	Catholic Emancipation. Tour in Belgium and Holland with Henry
}	1	Taylor and two other friends (June and July). S. is laid up with
		an injured foot at Leyden, and stays there for a fortnight with the
1		poet Bilderdijk, whose wife had translated Roderick into Dutch verse.
1	1	A Tale of Paraguay published.

A.D.	ÆT.	
1826	52	
	1	Holland (June) with H. Taylor and Rickman. During his absence
	ł	is returned to Parliament for the borough of Downton, through the
	ł	influence of Lord Radnor; but refuses to accept the honour. Death
		of Isabel S. (July 16). From this last blow Mrs. S. never really
		recovers. Vindiciae Ecclesiae Anglicanae published.
	ŀ	[Solitary Hours (Caroline Bowles).]
1007	~0	
1827	53	
		family, for Jones's benefit, and to prefix a sketch of the lives of un-
		educated poets. Mrs. S. plainly failing in health.
		[Poems (T. Hood). The Christian Year (Keble). Poems by Two
		Brothers (A. and C. Tennyson).]
1828	54	
	-	painted by Sir T. Lawrence for Sir R. Peel. Visits Caroline Bowles
		at Buckland. Death of his uncle, Mr. Hill (Sept.). Is paid £150 by
	1	Murray for a paper in the Quarterly on the Roman Catholic Question
	(
	1	and Ireland, strongly opposing Catholic Emancipation.
		[History of Peninsular War, vol. i (Sir W. Napier).]
1829	55	
	1	All for Love and The Legend of a Cock and a Hen (1 vol.), and Colloquies
	ı	on the Progress and Prospects of Society published. Mrs. Coleridge
		and Sara C. leave Greta Hall on the marriage of the latter to H. N.
	1	Coleridge, Mrs. C. subsequently taking up her residence with her
	ı	daughter and son-in-law. S. continues to advocate the establish-
	ı	ment of Co-operative Societies.
	1	[Chapters on Churchyards (Caroline Bowles). Imaginary Conversa-
		tions, second series (Landor).
1830	50	
1000	56	S. engaged in writing Life of Bunyan and Naval History of England.
	1	Life of Bunyan published, prefixed to an edition of Pilgrim's Progress.
1001		[Hazlitt died. Poems, Chiefly Lyrical (A. Tennyson).]
1831	57	S. visits Caroline Bowles at Buckland (Jan.). Visits Dr. Bell at
	ł	Cheltenham (June). Select Works of British Poets from Chaucer to
	l	Jonson published. S. continues (as, like Wordsworth, he had done
		from the first) strongly to oppose Parliamentary Reform.
	1	[Corn Law Rhymes (Ebenezer Elliott).]
1832	58	Essays, Moral and Political published (Jan. or ? Dec. 1831). History
	1	of the Peninsular War, vol. iii, published. Death of Dr. Bell, who
	1	leaves S. £1000, with a request that he should write his Life. S.
		refuses offer of a Professorship of History at Durham University.
	1	Landor visits S. at Keswick (June).
	1	[Sir W. Scott died. Crabbe died. Bentham died. Dr. Arnold
		buys Fox How.]
1833	59	Correspondence with Lord Ashley on Factory Legislation. S. begins
	1	to work at Dr. Bell's Life and Correspondence. Naval History of
	1	England, vols. i and ii, published.
		[Pauline (R. Browning). Poems (Hartley Coleridge).]
1834	60	The Doctor, &c., vols. i and ii, published. Edith May S. marries the
1004	100	Pay I W Warter (Tan) Naval History vol iii muhlished Lita
	1	Rev. J. W. Warter (Jan.). Naval History, vol. iii, published. Life
	1	of Cowper begun. Mrs. S. loses her reason (Sept.) and is removed
	l	to the asylum at York.
	ŀ	[S. T. C. died (July 25). C. Lamb died (Dec. 27). Philip van
	j	Artevelde (H. Taylor).]

A.D.	ÆT.	
1835	61	S. declines the offer of a baronetcy from Sir R. Peel, who then obtains
	1	for him an additional pension of £300 a year. Mrs. S., though without
		regaining her reason, so far recovers as to be allowed to return to
		Keswick (March). Publication of Life and Works of Cowper (15
		vols., 1835–37) begun.
		[Yarrow Revisited and other Poems (Wordsworth). Mrs. Hemans
		died. James Hogg died. Paracelsus (R. Browning).]
1836	62	Tour in West of England with Cuthbert S. (OctFeb. 1837). Meets
		Landor at Clifton and stays at Bremhill with W. L. Bowles.
	į	[Pericles and Aspasia (Landor). The Birthday (Caroline Bowles).
		William Taylor of Norwich died.]
1837	63	S. corresponds with Charlotte Brontë in answer to a request for his
		criticism of her poems. 'Mr. Southey's letter was kind and admirable,
	i	a little stringent, but it did me good' (C. Brontë). Publication of
		collected edition of S.'s poems in 10 vols. begun. Cuthbert S. matri-
	i	culates at Oxford. Mrs. S. died (Nov. 16).
		[Strafford (R. Browning). The French Revolution (T. Carlyle).]
1838	64	Tour in Normandy, Brittany, and Touraine with Cuthbert S., H. C.
	ì	Robinson, and three other friends (Aug., Sept.). S. now first begins
	1	to show signs of failing powers. At Buckland with Caroline Bowles
	1	(OctDec.).
1839	65	Bertha S. marries her cousin Herbert Hill. S. marries Caroline Bowles
		(June 5). Soon afterwards his mind fails rapidly, until its powers
	1	are completely lost. In this condition he lives at Keswick until his
		death.
1843	69	Robert Southey died (March 21). Buried in Crosthwaite Churchyard.

PREFACES

TO THE COLLECTED EDITION OF TEN VOLUMES. PUBLISHED IN 1837, 1838.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST VOLUME

At the age of sixty-three I have undertaken to collect and edite my Poetical Works, with the last corrections that I can expect to bestow upon They have obtained a reputation equal to my wishes; and I have this ground for hoping it may not be deemed hereafter more than commensurate with their deserts, that it has been gained without ever accommodating myself to the taste or fashion of the times. Thus to collect and revise them is a duty which I owe to that part of the Public by whom they have been auspiciously received, and to those who will take a lively concern in my good name when I shall have departed.

The arrangement was the first thing to be considered. In this the order wherein the respective poems were written has been observed, so far as was compatible with a convenient classifica-Such order is useful to those who read critically, and desire to trace the progress of an author's mind in his writings; and by affixing dates to the minor pieces, under whatever head they are disposed, the object is sufficiently

attained.

Next came the question of correction. There was no difficulty with those poems which were composed after the author had acquired his art (so far as he has acquired it), and after his opinions were matured. It was only necessary to bear in mind the risk there must ever be of injuring a poem by verbal alterations

much as it must be impossible to recall the precise train of thought in which any passage was conceived, and the considerations upon which not the single verse alone, but the whole sentence, or paragraph, had been constructed: but with regard to more important changes, there could be no danger of introducing any discrepance in style. With juvenile pieces the case is different. From these the faults of diction have been weeded wherever it could be done without more trouble than the composition originally cost, and than the piece itself was worth. But inherent faults of conception and structure are incurable; and it would have been mere waste of time to recompose what it was impossible otherwise to amend.

If these poems had been now for the first time to be made public, there are some among them which, instead of being committed to the press, would have been consigned to the flames; not for any disgrace which could be reflected upon me by the crude compositions of my youth, nor for any harm which they could possibly do the reader, but merely that they might not cumber the collec-But 'nescit vox missa reverti'. Pirated editions would hold out as a recommendation, that they contained what I had chosen to suppress, and thus it becomes prudent, and therefore proper, that such pieces should be retained.

It has ever been a rule with me when I have imitated a passage, or borrowed an made long after it was written; inas- expression, to acknowledge the specific obligation. Upon the present occasion it behaves me to state the more general and therefore more important obligations which I am conscious of owing either to my predecessors, or my con-

temporaries.

My first attempts in verse were much too early to be imitative, but I was fortunate enough to find my way, when very young, into the right path. I read the Jerusalem Delivered and the Orlando Furioso again and again, in Hoole's translations: it was for the sake of their stories that I perused and re-perused these poems with ever new delight; and by bringing them thus within my reach in boyhood, the translator rendered me a service which, when I look back upon my intellectual life, I cannot estimate too highly. I owe him much also for his notes, not only for the information concerning other Italian romances which they imparted, but also for introducing me to Spenser; -how early, an incident which I well remember may show. Going with a relation into Bull's circulating library at Bath (an excellent one for those days), and asking whether they had the Faery Queen, the person who managed the shop said 'yes, they had it, but it was in obsolete language, and the young gentleman would not understand it'. But I. who had learned all I then knew of the history of England from Shakespear, and who had moreover read Beaumont and Fletcher, found no difficulty in Spenser's English, and felt in the beauty of his versification a charm in poetry of which I had never been fully sensible before. From that time I took Spenser for my master. I drank also betimes of Chaucer's well. The taste which had been acquired in that school was confirmed by Percy's Reliques and Warton's History of English Poetry; and a little later by Homer and the Bible. It was not likely to be corrupted afterwards.

My school-boy verses savoured of Grav, Mason, and my predecessor Warton; and in the best of my juvenile pieces it may be seen how much the

Akenside. I am conscious also of having derived much benefit at one time from Cowper, and more from Bowles; for which, and for the delight which his poems gave me at an age when we are most susceptible of such delight, my good friend at Bremhill. to whom I was then and long afterwards personally unknown, will allow me to make this grateful and cordial acknow-

ledgment. My obligation to Dr. Sayers is of a different kind. Every one who has an ear for metre and a heart for poetry. must have felt how perfectly the metre of Collins's Ode to Evening is in accordance with the imagery and the feeling. None of the experiments which were made of other unrhymed stanzas proved successful. They were either in strongly marked and well-known measures which unavoidably led the reader to expect rhyme, and consequently baulked him when he looked for it; or they were in stanzas as cumbrous as they were ill constructed. Dr. Sayers went upon a different principle, and succeeded admirably. 1 read his Dramatic Sketches of Northern Mythology when they were first published, and convinced myself when I had acquired some skill in versification, that the kind of verse in which his choruses were composed was not less applicable to narration than to lyrical poetry. Soon after I had begun the Arabian romance, for which this measure seemed the most appropriate vehicle, Gebir fell into my hands, and my verse was greatly improved by it, both in vividness and strength. Several years clapsed before I knew that Walter Landor was the author, and more before I had the good fortune to meet the person to whom I felt myself thus beholden. The days which I have passed with him in the Vale of Ewias, at Como, and lastly in the neighbourhood of Bristol. are some of those which have left with me 'a joy for memory'.

I have thus acknowledged all the specific obligations to my elders or contemporaries in the art, of which I am writer's mind had been imbued by distinctly conscious. The advantages arising from intimate intercourse with those who were engaged in similar pursuits cannot be in like manner specified, because in their nature they are imperceptible; but of such advantages no man has ever possessed more or greater, than at different times it has been my lot to enjoy. Personal attachment first, and family circumstances afterwards, connected me long and closely with Mr. Coleridge; and three-andthirty years have ratified a friendship with Mr. Wordsworth, which we believe will not terminate with this life, and which it is a pleasure for us to know will be continued and cherished as an heirloom by those who are dearest to us both.

When I add what has been the greatest of all advantages, that I have passed more than half my life in retirement, conversing with books rather than men, constantly and unweariably engaged in literary pursuits, communing with my own heart, and taking that course which upon mature consideration seemed best to myself, I have said every thing necessary to account for the characteristics of my poetry, whatever they may bo.

It was in a mood resembling in no slight degree that wherewith a person hope.

Keswick, May 10, 1837.

in sound health, both of body and mind, makes his will and sets his worldly affairs in order, that I entered upon the serious task of arranging and revising the whole of my poetical works. What, indeed, was it but to bring in review before me the dreams and aspirations of my youth. and the feelings whereto I had given that free utterance which by the usages of this world is permitted to us in poetry, and in poetry alone? Of the smaller pieces in this collection there is scarcely one concerning which I cannot vividly call to mind when and where it was composed. I have perfect recollection of the spots where many, not of the scenes only, but of the images which I have described from nature, were observed and noted. And how would it be possible for me to forget the interest taken in these poems, especially the longer and more ambitious works. by those persons nearest and dearest to me then, who witnessed their growth and completion? Well may it be called a serious task thus to resuscitate the past! But serious though it be, it is not painful to one who knows that the end of his journey cannot be far distant, and, by the blessing of God, looks on to its termination with sure and certain

SECOND VOLUME, PREFACE TO THE

BEING THE FIRST OF TWO VOLUMES ENTITLED 'JUVENILE AND MINOR POEMS'. BEGINNING WITH 'THE TRIUMPH OF WOMAN', AND ENDING WITH 'HYMN TO THE PENATES'

THE earliest pieces in these Juvenile! and Minor Poems were written before the writer had left school; between the date of these and of the latest there is an interval of six-and-forty years: as much difference, therefore, may be perceived in them, as in the different stages of life from boyhood to old age.

little volume published at Bath in the subscription.

autumn of 1794, with this title:-'Poems, containing the Retrospect, &c. by Robert Loyell and Robert Southey. 1795; and with this motto-

> 'Minuentur atrae Horace. Carmine curae.'

At the end of that volume, Joan of Arc Some of the earliest appeared in a was announced as to be published by

Others were published at Bristol, 1797, in a single volume, with this motto from Akenside :-

'Goddess of the Lyre,-

with thee comes Majestic Truth: and where Truth deigns to

Her sister Liberty will not be far.'

A second volume followed at Bristol in 1799, after the second edition of Joan of Arc, and commencing with the Vision of the Maid of Orleans. The motto to this was from the Epilogue to Spenser's Shepherds' Calendar:-

'The better, please; the worse, displease: I ask no more.'

In the third edition of Joan of Arc. the Vision was printed separately, at the end; and its place was supplied in the second edition of the Poems by miscellaneous pieces.

A separate volume, entitled Metrical Tales and other Poems, was published in 1805, with this advertisement: -- 'These Poems were published some years ago in the Annual Anthology. (Bristol, 1799, 1800.) They have now been revised and printed in this collected form, because they have pleased those readers whom the Author was most desirous of pleasing. Let them be considered as the desultory productions of a man sedulously employed upon better things.

These various pieces were re-arranged in three volumes, under the title of Minor Poems, in 1815, with this motto,

'Nos haec novimus esse nihil;'

and they were published a second time in the same form, 1823.

The Ballads and Metrical Tales contained in those volumes, belong to a different part of this collection; their other contents are comprised here; and the present volume consists, with very few exceptions, of pieces written in youth or early manhood. One of these written in my twentieth year, not having been published at the time, would never have been made public by my own act and deed; but as Wat

upon its surreptitious publication, it seemed proper that a production which will be specially noticed whenever the author shall be delivered over to the biographers, should be included here. They who may desire to know more than is stated in the advertisement now prefixed to it, are referred to a Letter addressed to William Smith, Esq. M.P., 1817, reprinted in the second volume of my Essays Moral and Political, 1832.

The second volume of this part of the Collection contains one juvenile piece, and many which were written in early manhood. The remainder were composed in middle or later life, and comprise (with one exception, that will more conveniently be arranged elsewhere,) all the odes which as Poet Laureat I have written upon national occasions. Of these the Carmen Triumphale, and the Carmina Aulica, were separately published in quarto in 1814, and reprinted together in a little volume in 1821.

The Juvenile and Minor Poems in this Collection bear an inconsiderable proportion to those of substantive length: for a small part only of my youthful effusions were spared from those autosda-fé in which from time to time piles upon piles have been consumed. middle life works of greater extent, or of a different kind, left me little leisure for occasional poetry; the impulse ceased, and latterly the inclination was so seldom felt, that it required an effort to call it forth.

Sir William Davenant, in the Preface to Gondibert, 'took occasion to accuse and condemn all those hasty digestions of thought which were published in his youth; a sentence, said he, not pronounced out of melancholy rigour, but from a cheerful obedience to the just authority of experience. For that grave mistress of the world, experience, (in whose profitable school those before the Flood stayed long, but we, like wanton children, come thither late, yet too soon are called out of it, and fetched home by death,) hath taught me that Tyler obtained considerable notoriety the engenderings of unripe age become

abortive and deformed: and that 'tis a high presumption to entertain a nation (who are a poet's standing guest, and require monarchical respect,) with hasty provisions; as if a poet might imitate the familiar despatch of faulconers, mount his Pegasus, unhood his Muse, and, with a few flights, boast he hath provided a feast for a prince. Such posting upon Pegasus I have long since foreborne,' Yet this eminently thoughtful poet was so far from seeking to suppress the crude compositions which he thus condemned, that he often expressed a great desire to see all his pieces collected in one volume: and, conformably to his wish, they were so collected, after his decease, by his widow and his friend: Herringman the bookseller.

Agreeing with Davenant in condemning the greater part of my juvenile pieces, it is only as crudities that I condemn them; for in all that I have written, whether in prose or verse, there has never been a line which for any compunctious reason, living or dying, I could

wish to blot. Davenant had not changed his opinion of his own youthful productions so as to overlook in his age the defects which he had once clearly perceived; but he knew that pieces which it would indeed have been presumptuous to reproduce on the score of their merit, might yet be deemed worthy of preservation on other grounds; that to his family and friends, and to those who might take any interest in English poetry hereafter, they would possess peculiar value, as characteristic memorials of one who had held no inconsiderable place in the literature of his own times; feeling, too, that he was not likely to be forgotten by posterity, he thought that after the specimen which he had produced in his Gondibert of a great and elaborate poem, his early attempts would be regarded with curiosity by such of his successors as should, like him, study poetry as an art, -for as an art it must be studied by those who would excel in it, though excellence in it is not attainable by art alone.

The cases are very few in which any thing more can be inferred from juvenile poetry, than that the aspirant possesses imitative talent, and the power of versifying, for which, as for music, there must be a certain natural aptitude. It is not merely because 'they have lacked culture and the inspiring aid of books'. that so many poets who have been 'sown by Nature', have 'wanted the accomplishment of verse', and brought forth no fruit after their kind. Men of the highest culture, of whose poetical temperament no doubt can be entertained, and who had 'taken to the height the measure of themselves', have yet failed in their endeavour to become poets, for want of that accomplishment. It is frequently possessed without any other qualification, or any capacity for improvement: but then the innate and incurable defect that renders it abortive. is at once apparent.

The state of literature in this kingdom during the last fifty years has produced the same effect upon poetry that academies produce upon painting; in both arts every possible assistance is afforded to imitative talents, and in both they are carried as far as the talent of imitation can reach. But there is one respect in which poetry differs widely from the sister arts. Its fairest promise frequently proves deceitful, whereas both in painting and music the early indications of genius are unequivocal. children who were called musical prodigies, have become great musicians; and great painters, as far as their history is known, have displayed in childhood that accuracy of eye, and dexterity of hand, and shaping faculty, which are the prime requisites for their calling. But it is often found that young poets of whom great expectations were formed, have made no progress, and have even fallen short of their first performances. It may be said that this is because men apply themselves to music and to painting as their professions, but that no one makes poetry the business of his

¹ Wordsworth.

life. This, however, is not the only reason: the indications, as has already been observed, are far less certain; and the circumstances of society are far less favourable for the moral and intellectual culture which is required for all the higher branches of poetry, ... all indeed that deserves the name.

My advice as to publishing, has often been asked by young poets, who suppose that experience has qualified me to give it, and who have not yet learnt how seldom advice is taken, and how little therefore it is worth. As a general rule, it may be said that one who is not deceived in the estimate which he has

Keswick, Sept. 30, 1837.

formed of his own powers, can neither write too much in his youth, nor publish too little. It cannot, however, be needful to caution the present race of poetical adventurers against hurrying with their productions to the press, for there are obstacles enough in the way of publication. Looking back upon my own career, and acknowledging my imprudence in this respect, I have nevertheless no cause to wish that I had pursued a different course. In this, as in other circumstances of my life, I have reason to be thankful to that merciful Providence which shaped the ends that I had roughly hewn for myself.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD VOLUME,

BEING THE SECOND OF 'JUVENILE AND MINOR POEMS

In a former Preface my obligations to Akenside were acknowledged, with especial reference to the Hymn to the Penates; the earliest of my Inscriptions also originated in the pleasure with which I perused those of this favourite author. Others of a later date bear a nearer resemblance to the general character of Chiabrera's epitaphs. Those which relate to the Peninsular War are part of a series which I once hoped to have completed. The epitaph for Bishop Butler was originally composed in the lapidary style, to suit the monument in Bristol Cathedral: it has been remodelled here, that I might express myself more at length, and in a style more accordant with my own judgement.

One thing remains to be explained, and I shall then have said all that it becomes me to say concerning these Minor Poems.

It was stated in some of the newspapers that Walter Scott and myself became competitors for the Poet-Laureateship upon the death of Mr. Pye; that we met accidentally at the Prince Regent's levee, each in pursuit of his pretensions, and that some words which

were not over-courteous on either side passed between us on the occasion;—to such impudent fabrications will those persons resort who make it their business to pander for public curiosity. The circumstances relating to that appointment have been made known in Mr. Lockhart's Life of Sir Walter. His conduct was, as it always was, characteristically generous, and in the highest degree friendly. Indeed, it was neither in his nature nor in mine to place our selves in competition with any one, or ever to regard a contemporary as a rival. The world was wide enough for us all.

Upon his declining the office, and using his influence, without my knowledge, to obtain it for me, his biographer says, 'Mr. Southey was invited to accept the vacant laurel; and to the honour of the Prince Regent, when he signified that his acceptance must depend on the office being thenceforth so modified as to demand none of the old formal odes, leaving it to the Poet-Laureate to choose his own time for celebrating any great public event that

¹ Vol. iii, p. 88.

might occur, his Royal Highness had the good sense and good taste at once to acquiesce in the propriety of this alteration. The office was thus relieved from the burden of ridicule which had, in spite of so many illustrious names, adhered to it.' The alteration, however, was not brought about exactly in this manner.

I was on the way to London when the correspondence upon this subject between Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Croker took place. A letter from Scott followed me thither, and on my arrival in town I was informed of what had been done. No wish for the Laureatcship had passed across my mind, nor had I ever dreamt that it would be proposed to me. My first impulse was to decline it; not from any fear of ridicule, still less of obloquy, but because I had ceased for several years to write occathe inclination had sional verses: departed; and though willing as a bee to work from morn till night in collecting honey, I had a great dislike to spinning like a spider. Other considerations overcame this reluctance, and made it my duty to accept the appointment. I then expressed a wish to Mr. Croker that it might be placed upon a footing which would exact from the holder nothing like a schoolboy's task, but leave him at liberty to write when, and in what manner, he thought best, and thus render the office as honourable as it was originally designed to be. this, Mr. Croker, whose friendliness to me upon every occasion I gladly take this opportunity of acknowledging, observed that it was not for us to make terms with the Prince Regent. you', said he, 'and write your Ode for the New Year. You can never have a better subject than the present state of the war affords you.' He added that some fit time might be found for representing the matter to the Prince in its proper light.

made known, than I received a note the breach than in the observance.

with Sir William Parsons's compliments. requesting that I would let him have the Ode as soon as possible, Mr. Pye having always provided him with it six weeks before the New Year's Day. I was not wanting in punctuality; nevertheless, it was a great trouble to Sir William that the office should have been conferred upon a poet who did not walk in the ways of his predecessor, and do according to all things that he had done; for Mr. Pye had written his odes always in regular stanzas and in rhyme. Poor Sir William, though he had not fallen upon evil tongues and evil times, thought he had fallen upon evil ears when he was to set verses like mine to music.

But the labour which the Chief Musician bestowed upon the verses of the Chief Poet was so much labour lost. The performance of the Annual Odes had been suspended from the time of the King's illness, in 1810. Under the circumstances of his malady, any festal celebration of the birth-day would have been a violation of natural feeling and public propriety. On those occasions it was certain that nothing would be expected from me during the life of George III. But the New Year's performance might perhaps be called for, and for that, therefore, I always prepared. Upon the accession of George IV, I made ready an Ode for St. George's Day, which Mr. Shield, who was much better satisfied with his yokefellow than Sir William had been, thought happily suited for his purpose. It was indeed well suited for us both. All my other Odes related to the circumstances of the passing times, and could have been appropriately performed only when they were composed; but this was a standing subject, and, till this should be called for, it was needless to provide any thing else. The annual performance had, however, by this time fallen completely into disuse; and thus terminated a custom which may truly My appointment had no sooner been be said to have been more honoured in

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH VOLUME,

CONTAINING 'THALABA THE DESTROYER'

Joan of Arc, that the Author would not be in England to witness its reception, but that he would attend to liberal criticism, and hope to profit by it in the composition of a poem upon the discovery of America by the Welsh prince Madoc.

That subject I had fixed upon when a schoolboy, and had often conversed upon the probabilities of the story with the schoolfellow to whom, sixteen years afterwards, I had the satisfaction of inscribing the poem. It was commenced at Bath in the autumn of 1794; but, upon putting Joan of Arc to the press, its progress was necessarily suspended, and it was not resumed till the second edition of that work had been completed. Then it became my chief occupation during twelve months that I resided in the village of Westbury, near Bristol. This was one of the happiest portions of my life. I never before or since produced so much poetry in the same space of time. The smaller pieces were communicated by letter to Charles Lamb, and had the advantage of his animadversions. I was then also in habits of the most frequent and intimate intercourse with Davy,-then in the flower and freshness of his youth. We were within an easy walk of each other, over some of the most beautiful ground in that beautiful part of England. When I went to the Pncumatic Institution, he had to tell me of some new experiment or discovery, and of the views which it opened for him; and when he came to Westbury there was a fresh portion of Madoc for his hearing. Davy encouraged me with his hearty approbation during its progress; and the bag of nitrous oxyde with which he generally regaled me upon my visits to him, was not required for raising my For Lisbon, therefore, we set off; and,

It was said, in the original Preface to spirits to the degree of settled fair, and keeping them at that elevation.

> In November, 1836, I walked to that village with my son, wishing to show him a house endeared to me by so many recollections; but not a vestige of it remained, and local alterations rendered it impossible even to ascertain its site.which is now included within the grounds of a Nunnery! The bosom friends with whom I associated there have all departed before me; and of the domestic circle in which my happiness was then centered, I am the sole survivor.

> When we removed from Westbury at Midsummer, 1799, I had reached the penultimate book of Madoc. That poem was finished on the 12th of July following, at Kingsdown, Bristol, in the house of an old lady, whose portrait hangs, with that of my own mother, in the room wherein I am now writing. The son who lived with her was one of my dearest friends, and one of the best men I ever knew or heard of. In those days I was an early riser: the time so gained was usually employed in carrying on the poem which I had in hand; and when Charles Danvers came down to breakfast on the morning after Madoc was completed, I had the first hundred lines of Thalaba to show him, fresh from the mint.

> But this poem was neither crudely conceived nor hastily undertaken. I had fixed upon the ground, four years before, for a Mahommedan tale; and in the course of that time the plan had been formed and the materials collected. It was pursued with unabating ardour at Exeter, in the village of Burton, near Christ Church, and afterwards at Kingsdown, till the ensuing spring, when Dr. Beddoes advised me to go to the south of Europe, on account of my health.

hastening to Falmouth, found the packet, in which we wished to sail, detained in harbour by westerly winds. 'Six days we watched the weathercock, and sighed for north-easters. I walked on the beach, caught soldier-crabs, admired the sea-anemonies in their ever-varying shapes of beauty, read Gebir, and wrote half a book of Thalaba.' This sentence is from a letter written on our arrival at Lisbon; and it is here inserted because the sea-anemonies (which I have never had any other opportunity of observing) were introduced in Thalaba soon afterwards; and because, as already stated, I am sensible of having derived great improvement from the frequent perusal of Gebir at that time.

Change of circumstances and of climate effected an immediate cure of what proved to be not an organic disease. A week after our landing at Lisbon I resumed my favourite work, and I completed it at Cintra, a year and six days after the day of its commencement.

A fair transcript was sent to England. Mr. Rickman, with whom I had fallen in at Christ Church in 1797, and whose friendship from that time I have ever accounted among the singular advantages and happinesses of my life, negociated for its publication with Messrs. Longman and Rees. It was printed at Bristol by Biggs and Cottle, and the task of correcting the press was undertaken for me by Davy and our common friend Danvers, under whose roof it had been begun.

The copy which was made from the original draught, regularly as the poem proceeded, is still in my possession. The first corrections were made as they occurred in the process of transcribing, at which time the verses were tried upon as fair game.

my own ear, and had the advantage of being seen in a fair and remarkably legible handwriting. In this transcript the dates of time and place were noted, and things which would otherwise have been forgotten have thus been brought to my recollection. Herein also the alterations were inserted which the poem underwent before it was printed. They were very numerous. Much was pruned off, and more was ingrafted. was not satisfied with the first part of the concluding book; it was therefore crossed out, and something substituted altogether different in design; but this substitution was so far from being fortunate, that it neither pleased my friends in England nor myself. I then made a third attempt, which succeeded to my own satisfaction and to theirs.

I was in Portugal when Thalaba was published. Its reception was very different from that with which Joan of Arc had been welcomed: in proportion as the poem deserved better it was treated worse. Upon this occasion my name was first coupled with Mr. Words-We were then, and for some time afterwards, all but strangers to each other; and certainly there were no two poets in whose productions, the difference not being that between good and bad, less resemblance could be found. But I happened to be residing at Keswick when Mr. Wordsworth and I began to be acquainted; Mr. Coleridge also had resided there; and this was reason enough for classing us together as a school of poets. Accordingly, for more than twenty years from that time, every tyro in criticism who could smatter and sneer, tried his 'prentice hand' upon the Lake Poets; and every young sportsman who carried a popular in the field of satire, considered them

Keswick, Nov. 8, 1837.

PREFACE TO THE FIFTH VOLUME,

CONTAINING 'MADOC'

in the summer of 1799. Mr. Coleridge advised me to publish it at once, and to defer making any material alterations, if any should suggest themselves, till a second edition. But four years had passed over my head since Joan of Arc was sent to the press, and I was not disposed to commit a second imprudence. If the reputation obtained by that poem had confirmed the confidence which I felt in myself, it had also the effect of making me perceive my own deficiencies, and endeavour with all diligence to supply them. I pleased myself with the hope that it would one day be likened to Tasso's Rinuldo, and that as the Jerusalem had fulfilled the promise of better things whereof that poem was the pledge, so might Madoc be regarded in relation to the juvenile work which had preceded it. Thinking that this would probably be the greatest poem I should ever produce, my intention was to bestow upon it all possible care, as indeed I had determined never again to undertake any subject without due preparation. With this view it was my wish, before Madoc could be considered as completed, to see more of Wales than I had yet seen. This I had some opportunity of doing in the autumn of 1801, with my old friends and schoolfellows Charles Wynn and Peter Elmsley. And so much was I bent upon making myself better acquainted with Welsh scenery, manners, and traditions, than could be done by books alone, that if I had succeeded in obtaining a house in the Vale of Neath, for which I was in treaty the year following, it would never have been my fortune to be classed among the Lake Poets.

Little had been done in revising the poem till the first year of my abode at

When Madoc was brought to a close | 1803, it was resumed, and twelve months were diligently employed in reconstruct-The alterations were more ing it. material than those which had been made in Joan of Arc, and much more extensive. In its original form the poem consisted of fifteen books, containing about six thousand lines. was now divided into two parts, and enlarged in the proportion of a full third. Shorter divisions than the usual one of books, or cantos, were found more convenient; the six books therefore, which the first part comprised, were distributed in seventeen sections, and the other nine in twenty-seven. These changes in the form of the work were neither capriciously made, nor for the sake of novelty. The story consisted of two parts, almost as distinct as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; and the subdivisions were in like manner indicated by the subject. The alterations in the conduct of the piece occasioned its increase of length.

When Matthew Lewis published the Castle Spectre, he gave as his reason for introducing negro guards in a drama which was laid in feudal times, that he thought their appearance would produce a good effect; and if the effect would have been better by making them blue instead of black, blue, said he, they should have been. He was not more bent upon pleasing the public by stage effect, (which no dramatist ever studied more successfully,) than I was upon following my own sense of propriety, and thereby obtaining the approbation of that fit audience, which, being contented that it should be few. I was sure to find. Mr. Sotheby, whose Saul was published about the same time as Madoc, said to me a year or two afterwards, 'You and I, Sir, find that blank verse will not do in these days; we must Keswick: there, in the latter end of stand upon another tack.' Mr. Sotheby

considered the decision of the Pie-Poudre Court as final. But my suit was in that Court of Record which sooner or later pronounces unerringly upon the merits of the case.

Madoc was immediately reprinted in America in numbers, making two octavo volumes. About nine years afterwards there appeared a paper in the Quarterly Review, which gave great offence to the Americans; if I am not mistaken in my recollections, it was the first in that journal which had any such tendency. An American author, whose name I heard, but had no wish to remember, supposed it to have been written by me; and upon this gratuitous supposition, (in which, moreover, he happened to be totally mistaken,) he attacked me in a pamphlet, which he had the courtesy to send me, and which I have preserved among my Curiosities of Literature. It is noticed in this place, because, among other vituperative accusations, the pamphleteer denounced the author of Madoc as having 'meditated a most serious injury against the reputation of the New World, by attributing its discovery and colonization to a little vagabond Welsh Prince'. This, he said, being a most insidious attempt against the honour of America and the reputation of Columbus.' 1

This poem was the means of making me personally acquainted with Miss Seward. Her encomiastic opinion of it was communicated to me through Charles Lloyd, in a way which required some courteous acknowledgement; this led to an interchange of letters, and an invitation to Lichfield, where, accordingly, I paid her a visit, when next on my way to London, in 1807. She resided in the Bishop's palace. I was ushered up the broad brown stair-case

by her cousin, the Reverend Henry White, then one of the minor canons of that cathedral, a remarkable person, who introduced me into the presence with jubilant but appalling solemnity. Miss Seward was seated at her desk. She had just finished some verses to be 'inscribed on the blank leaves of the poem Madoc', and the first greeting was no sooner past, than she requested that I would permit her to read them It was a mercy that she did to mc. not ask me to read them aloud. she read admirably herself. The situation, however, in which I found myself, was so ridiculous, and I was so apprehensive of catching the eye of one person in the room, who was equally afraid of meeting mine, that I never felt it more difficult to control my emotions, than while listening, or seeming to listen, to my own praise and glory. But, bending my head as if in a posture of attentiveness, and screening my face with my hand, and occasionally using some force to compress the risible muscles, I got through the scene without any misbehaviour, and expressed my thanks, if not in terms of such glowing admiration as she was accustomed to receive from others, and had bestowed upon my unworthy self, yet as well as I could. I passed two days under her roof, and corresponded with her from that time till her death.

Miss Seward had been crippled by having repeatedly injured one of her knee-pans. Time had taken away her bloom and her beauty, but her fine countenance retained its animation, and her eyes could not have been brighter nor more expressive in her youth. Sir Walter Scott says of them, 'they were auburn, of the precise shade and hue of her hair. In reciting, or in speaking with animation, they appeared to become darker, and as it were to flash fire. I should have hesitated,' he adds, 'to state the impression which this peculiarity made upon me at the time, had not my observation been confirmed by that of the first actress on this or any other stage, with whom I lately hap-

¹ The title of this notable pamphlet is, 'The United States and England; being a Reply to the Criticism on Inchiquin's Letters, contained in the Quarterly Keview for January 1814. New York: published by A. H. Inskeep; and Bradford and Inskeep, Philadelphia. Van Winkle and Wiley, Printers, 1815.'

pened to converse on our deceased friend's expressive powers of countenance.' ¹ Sir Walter has not observed that this peculiarity was hereditary. Describing, in one of her earlier letters, a scene with her mother, she says, 'I grew so saucy to her, that she looked grave, and took her pinch of snuff, first at one nostril, and then at the other, with swift and angry energy, and her eyes began to grow dark and to flash.' ² Tis an odd peculiarity: but the balls of my mother's eyes change from brown into black, when she feels either indignation or bodily pain.' ²

Miss Seward was not so much overrated at one time, as she has since been unduly depreciated. She was so considerable a person when her reputation was at its height, that Washington said no circumstance in his life had been so mortifying to him as that of having been made the subject of her invective in her Monody on Major André. After peace had been concluded between Great Britain and the United States, he commissioned an American officer, who was about to sail for England, to call upon her at Lichfield, and explain to her, that instead of having caused André's death, he had endeavoured to save him; and she was requested to peruse the papers in proof of this, which he sent for her perusal. 'They filled me with contrition', says Miss Seward, 'for the rash injustice of my censure.' 3

An officer of her name served as lieutenant in the garrison at Gibraltar during the siege. To his great surprise, . . . for he had no introduction which could lead him to expect the honour of

¹ Biographical Preface to the *Poetical Works of Anna Seward*, p. xxiii.

² Literary Correspondence. 1b., p. exxi. ³ Letters of Anna Seward, vol. v, p. 143. such notice, . . . he received an invitation to dine with General Elliot. The General asked him if he were related to the author of the Monody on Major André. The Lieutenant replied that he had the honour of being very distantly related to her, but he had not the happiness of her acquaintance. 'It is sufficient. Mr. Seward,' said the General, 'that you bear her name, and a fair reputation, to entitle you to the notice of every soldier who has it in his power to serve and oblige a military brother. You will always find a cover for you at my table, and a sincere welcome; and whenever it may be in my power to serve you essentially, I shall not want the inclination.' 4

These ancodotes show the estimation in which she was, not undeservedly, held. Her epistolary style was distorted and disfigured by her admiration of Johnson; and in her poetry she set, rather than followed, the brocade fashion of Dr. Darwin. Still there are unquestionable proofs of extraordinary talents and great ability both in her letters and her poems. She was an exemplary daughter, a most affectionate and faithful friend. Sir Walter has estimated, with characteristic skill, her powers of criticism, and her strong prepossessions upon literary points. And believing that the more she was known, the more she would have been esteemed and admired, I bear a willing testimony to her accomplishments and her genius, to her generous disposition, her frankness, and her sincerity and warmth of heart.

Keswick, Feb. 19, 1838.

^{*} Letters of Anna Seward, vol. i, p. 298.

PREFACE TO THE SIXTH VOLUME,

BEING THE FIRST OF 'BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES'

Most of the pieces in this volume were written in early life, a few are comparatively of recent date, and there are some of them which lay unfinished for

nearly thirty years.

Upon reading, on their first appearance, certain of these Ballads, and of the lighter pieces now comprised in the third volume of this collective edition, Mr. Edgeworth said to me, 'Take my word for it, Sir, the bent of your genius is for comedy.' I was as little displeased with the intended compliment as one of the most distinguished poets of this age was with Mr. Sheridan, who, upon returning a play which he had offered for acceptance at Drury Lane, told him it was a comical tragedy.

My late friend, Mr. William Taylor of Norwich, whom none who knew him intimately can ever call to mind without affection and regret, has this passage in his Life of Dr. Savers:—' Not long after this (the year 1800), Mr. Robert Southey visited Norwich, was introduced to Dr. Savers, and partook those feelings of complacent admiration which his presence was adapted to inspire.--Dr. Sayers pointed out to us in conversation, as adapted for the theme of a ballad, a story related by Olaus Magnus of a witch, whose coffin was confined by three chains, sprinkled with holy but who was, nevertheless, water; carried off by demons. Already, I believe, Dr. Sayers had made a ballad on the subject, so did I, and so did Mr. Southey; but after seeing the Old Woman of Berkeley, we agreed in awarding to it the preference. Still, the very different manner in which each had employed the same basis of narration might render welcome the opportunity of comparison; but I have not found among the papers of Dr. Sayers a copy of his poem.

There is a mistake here as to the date. This, my first visit to Norwich, was in the spring of 1798; and I had so much to interest me there in the society of my kind host and friend, Mr. William Taylor, that the mention at Dr. Savers's table of the story in Olaus Magnus made no impression on me at the time, and was presently forgotten. Indeed, if I had known that either he or his friend had written or intended to write a ballad upon the subject, that knowledge, however much the story might have pleased me, would have withheld me from all thought of versifying it. In the autumn of the same year, I passed some days at Hereford with Mr. William Bowver Thomas, one of the friends with whom. in 1796, I had visited the Arrabida Convent near Setubal. By his means I obtained permission to make use of the books in the Cathedral Library, and accordingly I was locked up for several mornings in that part of the Cathedral where the books were kept in chains. So little were these books used at that time, that in placing them upon the shelves, no regard had been had to the length of the chains; and when the volume which I wished to consult was tastened to one of the upper shelves by a short chain, the only means by which it was possible to make use of it was, by piling upon the reading desk as many volumes with longer chains as would reach up to the length of its tether; then, by standing on a chair, I was able to effect my purpose. There, and thus, I first read the story of the Old Woman of Berkeley, in Matthew of Westminster, and transcribed it into a pocket-book. I had no recollection of what had passed at Dr. Sayers's; but the circumstantial details in the monkish Chronicle impressed me so strongly, that I began to versify them that very evening. It was the

last day of our pleasant visit at Hereford; and on the following morning the remainder of the Ballad was pencilled in a post-chaise on our way to Abberley.

Mr. Wathen, a singular and obliging person, who afterwards made a voyage to the East Indies, and published an account of what he saw there, traced for me a facsimile of a wooden cut in the Nuremberg Chronicle (which was among the prisoners in the Cathedral). It represents the Old Woman's forcible abduction from her intended place of burial. This was put into the hands of a Bristol artist; and the engraving in wood which he made from it was prefixed to the Ballad when first published, in the second volume of my poems, 1799. The Devil alludes to it in his Walk, when he complains of a certain poet as having 'put him in ugly ballads with libellous pictures for sale'.

The passage from Matthew of Westminster was prefixed to the Ballad when first published, and it has continued to be so in every subsequent edition of my minor poems from that time to the present: for whenever I have founded either a poem, or part of one, upon any legend, or portion of history, I have either extracted the passage to which I was indebted, if its length allowed, or have referred to it. Mr. Payne Collier, however, after the Ballad, with its parentage affixed, had been twenty years before the public, discovered that I had copied the story from Heywood's Nine Books of various History concerning Women, and that I had not thought proper to acknowledge the obligation. gentleman's Poetical Decameron (vol. i, p. 323). Speaking of the book, one of his Interlocutors says, 'It is not of such rarity or singularity as to deserve particular notice now; only if you refer to p. 443, you will find the story on which Mr. Southey founded his mock-ballad of the Old Woman of Berkeley. You will see, too, that the mode in which it is told is extremely similar.

'Morton. Had Mr. Southey seen

Heywood's book?

BOURNE. It is not improbable; or some quotation from it, the resemblance is so exact: you may judge from the few following sentences.

Part of Heywood's narration is then given; upon which one of the speakers observes. 'The resemblance is exact. and it is not unlikely that Heywood and Southey copied from the same original.

'BOURNE. Perhaps so: Heywood quotes Guillerimus, in Special. Histor. lib. xxvi. c. 26. He afterwards relates, as Southey, that the Devil placed the Old Woman of Berkeley before him on a black horse, and that her screams were heard four miles off.

It cannot, however, be disputed, that Mr. Payne Collier has made one discovery relating to this subject; for he has discovered that the Old Woman of Berkeley is a mock-ballad. Certainly this was never suspected by the Author, or any of his friends. It obtained a very different character in Russia, where having been translated and published, it was prohibited for this singular reason, that children were said to be frightened by it. This I was told by a Russian The discovery is thus stated in that traveller who called upon me at Keswick.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SEVENTH VOLUME,

OR SECOND OF 'BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES'

THE two volumes of this collection which consist of Ballads and Metrical Tales contain the Author's earliest and latest productions of that kind: those which were written with most facility and most glee, and those upon which most to the subject and the mode of treating it. a little volume in 1829.

The Tale of Paraguay was published separately in 1825, having been so long in hand that the Dedication was written many years before the Poem was completed.

All for Love, and The Legend of a Cock time and pains were bestowed, according and a Hen, were published together in

PREFACE TO THE EIGHTH VOLUME.

CONTAINING 'THE CURSE OF KEHAMA'

tion of my 'Letters to Mr. Charles Butler, vindicating the Book of the Church', I had occasion to state that, while a school-boy at Westminster, I had formed an intention of exhibiting the most remarkable forms of Mythology which have at any time obtained among mankind, by making each the ground-work of a narrative poem. The performance, as might be expected, fell far short of the design, and yet it proved something more than a dream of juvenile ambition.

I began with the Mahommedan religion, as being that with which I was then best acquainted myself, and of which every one who had read the Arabian Nights' Entertainments possessed all the knowledge necessary for readily understanding and entering into the intent and spirit of the poem. Mr. Wilberforce thought that I had conveyed in it a very false impression of that religion, and that the moral sublimity which he admired in it was owing to this flattering misrepresentation. But Thalaba the Destroyer was professedly an Arabian Tale. The design required that I should bring into

SEVERAL years ago, in the Introduc- | belief and worship which had been developed under the Covenant with Ishmael. placing in the most favourable light the morality of the Koran, and what the least corrupted of the Mahommedans retain of the patriarchal faith. It would have been altogether incongruous to have touched upon the abominations engrafted upon it; first by the false Prophet himself, who appears to have been far more remarkable for audacious profligacy than for any intellectual endowments, and afterwards by the spirit of Oriental despotism which accompanied Mahommedanism wherever it was established.

Heathen Mythologies have generally been represented by Christian poets as the work of the Devil and his Angels; and the machinery derived from them was thus rendered credible, according to what was during many ages a received opinion. The plan upon which I proceeded in Madoc was to produce the effect of machinery as far as was consistent with the character of the poem, by representing the most remarkable religion of the New World such as it was, a system of atrocious priesteraft. It was not here as in Thalaba the foundaview the best features of that system of | tion of the poem, but, as usual in what are called epic poems, only incidentally connected with it.

When I took up, for my next subject, that mythology which Sir William Jones had been the first to introduce into English poetry, I soon perceived that the best mode of treating it would be to construct a story altogether mythological. In what form to compose it was then to be determined. No such question had arisen concerning any of my former poems. I should never for a moment have thought of any other measure than blank verse for Joan of Arc, and for Madoc, and afterwards for Roderick. The reason why the irregular rhymeless lyrics of Dr. Savers were preferred for Thalaba was, that the freedom and variety of such verse were suited to the story. Indeed, of all the laudatory criticisms with which I have been favoured during a long literary life, none ever gratified me more than that of Henry Kirke White upon this occasion, when he observed, that if any other known measure had been adopted, the poem would have been deprived of half its beauty, and all its propriety. And when he added, that the author never seemed to inquire how other men would treat a subject, or what might be the fashion of the times, but took that course which his own sense of fitness pointed out, I could not have desired more appropriate commendation.

The same sense of fitness which made me choose for an Arabian tale the simplest and easiest form of verse, induced me to take a different course in an Indian poem. It appeared to me, that here neither the tone of morals, nor the strain of poetry, could be pitched too high; that nothing but moral sublimity could compensate for the extravagance of the fictions, and that all the skill I might possess in the art of poetry was required to counterbalance the disadvantage of a mythology with which few readers were likely to be well acquainted, and which would appear monstrous if its deformities were not kept out of sight. I endeavoured, therefore, to combine the utmost rich- for the purity of our poetic taste against

ness of versification with the greatest freedom. The spirit of the poem was Indian, but there was nothing Oriental in the style. I had learnt the language of poetry from our own great masters and the great poets of antiquity.

No poem could have been more deliberately planned, nor more carefully composed. It was commenced at Lisbon on the first of May, 1801, and recommenced in the summer of the same year at Kingsdown, in the same house (endeared to me by many once delightful but now mournful recollections) in which Madoc had been finished, and Thalaba begun. A little was added during the winter of that year in London. It was resumed at Kingsdown in the summer of 1802, and then laid aside till 1806, during which interval Madoc was reconstructed and published. Resuming it then once more, all that had been written was recast at Keswick: there I proceeded with it leisurely, and finished it on the 25th of November, 1809. It is the only one of my long poems of which detached parts were written to be afterwards inserted in their proper places. Were I to name the persons to whom it was communicated during its progress, it would be admitted now that I might well be encouraged by their approbation; and indeed, when it was published, I must have been very unreasonable if I had not been satisfied with its reception.

It was not till the present edition of these Poems was in the press, that, eight-and-twenty years after Kehama had been published, I first saw the article upon it in the Monthly Review, parts of which cannot be more appropriately preserved any where than here; shows the determination with which the Reviewer entered upon his task, and the importance which he attached to it.

'Throughout our literary career we cannot recollect a more favourable opportunity than the present for a full discharge of our critical duty. We are indeed bound now to make a firm stand this last and most desperate assault, conducted as it is by a writer of considerable reputation, and unquestionably of considerable abilities. If this poem were to be tolerated, all things after it may demand impunity, and it will be in vain to contend hereafter for any one established rule of poetry as to design and subject, as to character and incident, as to language and versification. We may return at once to the rude hymn in honour of Bacchus, and indite strains adapted to the recitation of rustics in the season of vintage:—

"Quae cancrent agerentque peruncti faecibus ora."

It shall be our plan to establish these points, we hope, beyond reasonable controversy, by a complete analysis of the twenty-four sections (as they may truly be called) of the portentous work, and by ample quotations interspersed with remarks, in which we shall endeavour to withhold no praise that can fairly be claimed, and no censure that is obviously deserved.'

The reviewer fulfilled his promises, however much he failed in his object. He was not more liberal of censure than of praise, and he was not sparing of quotations. The analysis was sufficiently complete for the purposes of criticism, except that the critic did not always give himself the trouble to understand what he was determined to ridicule. 'It is necessary for us,' he said, 'according to our purpose of deterring future writers from the choice of such a story, or from such a management of that story, to detail the gross follies of the work in question; and tedious as the operation may be, we trust that in the judgement of all those lovers of literature who duly value the preservation of sound principles of composition among us, the end will excuse the means.' The means were ridicule and reprobation, and the end at seen a sample.

which he aimed was thus stated in the Reviewer's peroration.

'We know not that Mr. Southey's most devoted admirers can complain of our having omitted a single incident essential to the display of his character or the development of his plot. To other readers we should apologize for our prolixity, were we not desirous, as we hinted before, of giving a death-blow to the gross extravagancies of the author's school of poetry, if we cannot hope to reform so great an offender as himself. In general, all that nature and all that art has lavished on him is rendered useless by his obstinate adherence to his own system of fancied originality, in which every thing that is good is old, and every thing that is new is good for nothing. Convinced as we are that many of the author's faults proceed from mere idleness, deserving even less indulgence than the erroneous principles of his poetical system, we shall conclude by a general exhortation to all critics to condemn, and to all writers to avoid the example of combined carelessness and perversity which is here afforded by Mr. Southey; and we shall mark this last and worst eccentricity of his Muse with the following character: -Here is the composition of a poet not more distinguished by his genius and knowledge, than by his contempt for public opinion, and the utter depravity of his taste,—a depravity which is incorrigible, and, we are sorry to add, most unblushingly rejoicing in its own hopelessness of amendment.'

The Monthly Review has, I believe, been for some years defunct. I never knew to whom I was beholden for the good service rendered me in that Journal, when such assistance was of most value; nor by whom I was subsequently, during several years, favoured in the same Journal with such flagrant civilities as those of which the reader has here

PREFACE TO THE NINTH VOLUME.

CONTAINING 'RODERICK, THE LAST OF THE GOTHS'.

wick, Dec. 2, 1809, and finished there July 14, 1814.

A French translation, by M. B. de S., in three volumes 12mo., was published

in 1820, and another by M. le Chevalier * * *, in one volume 8vo, 1821. Both

are in prose.

When the latest of these versions was nearly ready for publication, the publisher, who was also the printer, insisted upon having a life of the author prefixed. The French public, he said, knew nothing of M. Southey, and in order to make the book sell, it must be managed to interest them for the writer. The Chevalier represented as a conclusive reason for not attempting any thing of the kind, that he was not acquainted with M. Southey's private history. 'Would you believe it?' says a friend of the translator's, from whose letter I transcribe what follows: 'this was his answer verbatim: N'importe, écrivez toujours; brodez, brodez-la un peu; que ce soit vrai ou non ce ne fait rien : qui prendra la peine de s'informer?' Accordingly a Notice sur M. Southey was composed, not exactly in conformity with the publisher's notions of biography, but from such materials as could be collected from magazines and other equally unauthentic sources.

In one of these versions a notable mistake occurs, occasioned by the French pronunciation of an English word. The whole passage indeed, in both versions, may be regarded as curiously exemplifying the difference between French and English poetry.

'The lamps and tapers now grew pale, And through the eastern windows slanting fell

The roseate ray of morn. Within those walls

This poem was commenced at Kes-| Returning day restored no cheerful sounds

> Or joyous motions of awakening life; But in the stream of light the speckled

As if in mimicry of insect play,

Floated with mazy movement. Sloping down

Over the altar pass'd the pillar'd beam, And rested on the sinful woman's grave As if it enter'd there, a light from Heaven.

So be it! cried Pelavo, even so!

As in a momentary interval,

When thought expelling thought, had left his mind

Open and passive to the influxes Of outward sense, his vacant eye was

there, . . So be it, Heavenly Father, even so! Thus may thy vivifying goodness shed Forgiveness there; for let not thou the

groans dying penitence, nor my bitter

prayers Before thy mercy-seat, be heard in vain! And thou, poor soul, who from the

dolorous house Of weeping and of pain, dost look to me To shorten and assuage thy penal term, Pardon me that these hours in other

thoughts And other duties than this garb, this

night Enjoin, should thus have pass'd! Our mother-land

Exacted of my heart the sacrifice;

And many a vigil must thy son perform Henceforth in woods and mountain

fastnesses, And tented fields, outwatching for her

The starry host, and ready for the work Of day, before the sun begins his course.' 1

¹ See Roderick, VIII, lines 101-33.

Il se livrait à toutes ces reflexions quand la lumière des lamnes et des cierges commença à pâlir, et que les premières teintes de l'aurore se montrèrent à travers les hautes croisées tournées vers l'orient. Le retour du jour ne ramena point dans ces murs des sons joyeux ni les mouvemens de la vie qui se réveille ; les seuls papillons de nuit, agitant leurs giles pesantes, bourdonnaient encore sous les voûtes ténébreuses. Bientôt le premier rayon du soleil, glissant obliquement par-dessus l'autel, vint s'arrêter sur la tombe de la temme pécheresse, et la lumière du ciel ' Que ce présage s'acsembla v pénétrer. complisse, s'écria Pelage, qui, absorbé dans ses méditations, fixait en ce moment ses yeux sur le tombeau de sa mère : 'Dieu de miséricorde, qu'il en soit ainsi! Puisse ta bonté vivifiante y verser de même le pardon! Que les sanalots de la pénitence expirante, et que mes prières amères ne montent point en vain devant le trône éternel. Et toi, pauvre ame, qui de ton séjour douloureux de souffrances et de larmes espères en moi pour abréger et adoucir ton supplice temporaire, pardonnemoi d'avoir, sous ces habits et dans cette nuit, détourné mes pensées sur d'autres devoirs. Notre patrie commune a exigé de moi ce sacrifice, et ton fils doit dorénavant accomplir plus d'une veille dans la profondeur des forêts, sur la cime des monts, dans les plaines couvertes de tentes, observant, pour l'amour de l'Espagne, la marche des astres de la nuit, et préparant l'ouvrage de sa journée avant que le soleil ne commence sa course.'-T. i, pp. 175-177.

In the other translation the motes are not converted into moths,—but the image is omitted.

Consumées dans des soins pareils les rapides heures s'écouloient, les lampes et les torches commençoient à pâlir, et l'oblique rayon du matin doroit déjà les vitraux élevés qui regardoient vers l'Orient : le retour du jour ne ramenoit point, dans cette sombre enceinte, les sons joyeux, ni le tableau mouvant de la vie qui se réveille : mais, tombant d'en haut, le céleste rayon, passant au-dessus de l'autel, vint frap'Ainsi soit-il,' s'écria Pelage, 'ainsi soit-il. ô divin Créateur ! Puisse ta vivifiante bonté verser ainsi le pardon en ce lieu! Que les gémissemens d'une mort pénitente. que mes amères prières ne soient pas arrivées en vain devant le trône de miséricorde! Et toi, qui, de ton séjour de souttrances et de larmes, regardes vers ton fils. pour abréger et soulager tes peines, vardonne, si d'autres devoirs ont rempli les heures que cette nuit et cet habit m'enjoignoient de te consacrer! Notre patrie exigeoit ce sacrifice; d'autres vigiles m'attendent dans les bois et les défilés de nos montagnes : et bientôt sous la tente, il me faudra veiller, le soir, avant que le ciel ne se couvre d'étoiles, être prét pour le travail du jour, avant que le soleil ne commence sa course.'-pp. 92, 93.

A very good translation in Dutch verse was published in two volumes, 8vo, 1823-4, with this title:—'Rodrigo de Goth, Koning van Spanie. Naar het Engelsch van Southey gevolgd, door Vrouwe Katharina Wilhelmina Bilderdiik. Te's Gravenhage.' It was sent to me with the following epistle from her husband Mr. Willem Bilderdijk.

'Roberto Southey, viro spectatissimo, Gulielmus Bilderdijk, S. P. D.

'Etsi ea nunc temporis passim invaluerit opinio, poetarum genus quam maxima gloriae cupiditate flagrare, mihi tamen contraria semper insedit persuasio, qui divinae Poëseos altitudinem veramque laudem non nisi ab iis cognosci putavi quorum prae caeteris e meliori luto finxerit praecordia Titan, neque aut verè aut justè judicari vatem nisi ab iis qui codem afflatu moveantur. gesimus autem jam agitur annus ex quo et ipse meos inter aequales poëta salutor, eumque locum quemineunte adolescentia occupare contigit, in hunc usque diem tenuisse videor, popularis aurae nunquam captator, quin immo perpetuus parcus ipse laudator. contemptor: censor gravis et nonnunquam molestus. Tuum vero nomen, Vir celeberrime ac spectatissime, jam antea veneratus, perlecto tuo de Roderico rege poëmate, non per le tombeau de la femme pécheresse. potui non summis extollere laudibus,

quo doctissimo simul ac venustissimo opere, si minus divinam Aeneida, saltem immortalem Tassonis Epopeiam tentasse. quin et certo respectu ita superasse videris, ut majorum perpaucos, aequalium neminem, cum vera fide ac pietate in Deum, tum ingenio omnique poëtica dote tibi comparandum existimem. Ne mireris itaque, carminis tui gravitate ac dulcedine captam, meoque judicio fultam non illaudatam in nostratibus Musam tuum illud nobile poema foeminea manu sed insueto labore attrectasse. Belgicoque sermone reddidisse. Hanc certe, per quadrantem seculi et quod excurrit felicissimo connubio mihi junctam. meamque in Divina arte alumnam ac sociam, nimium in eo sibi sumpsisse nemofacile arbitrabitur cui vel minimum Poëseos nostrae sensum usurpare contigerit; nec ego hos ejus conatus quos illustri tuo nomini dicandos putavit, tibi mea manu offerre dubitabam. Haec itaque utriusque nostrum in te observantiae specimina accipe, Vir illustrissime, ac si quod communium studiorum. si quod verae pietatis est vinculum. nos tibi ex animo habe addictissimos. Vale.

'Dabam Lugduni in Batavis, Ipsis idib. Februar. CIOIOCCCXXIV.'

I went to Leyden, in 1825, for the purpose of seeing the writer of this epistle and the lady who had translated my poem, and addressed it to me in some very affecting stanzas. It so happened, that on my arrival in that city, I was laid up under a surgeon's care; they took me into their house, and made the days of my confinement as pleasurable as they were memorable. I have never been acquainted with a man of higher intellectual power, nor of greater learning, nor of more various and extensive knowledge than Bilderdijk, confessedly the most distinguished man of letters in his own country. His wife was worthy of him. I paid them another visit the following year. They are now both gone to their rest, and I shall not look upon their like again.

Soon after the publication of Roderick, I received the following curious letter from the Ettrick Shepherd, (who had passed a few days with me in the preceding autumn,) giving me an account of his endeavours to procure a favourable notice of the poem in the Edinburgh Review.

. Edinburgh, Dec. 15, 1814.

'MY DEAR SIR,

'I was very happy at seeing the postmark of Keswick, and quite proud of the pleasure you make me believe my Wake has given to the beauteous and happy group at Greta Hall. Indeed few things could give me more pleasure, for I left my heart a sojourner among them. I have had a higher opinion of matrimony since that period than ever I had before, and I desire that you will positively give my kindest respects to each of them individually.

'The Pilgrim of the Sun is published, as you will see by the Papers, and if I may believe some communications that I have got, the public opinion of it is high; but these communications to an author are not to be de-

pended on.

'I have read Roderick over and over again, and am the more and more convinced that it is the noblest epic poem of the age. I have had some correspondence and a good deal of conversation with Mr. Jeffrey about it, though he does not agree with me in every particular. He says it is too long, and wants elasticity, and will not, he fears, be generally read, though much may be said in its favour. I had even teazed him to let me review it for him, on account, as I said, that he could not appreciate its merits. I copy one sentence out of the letter he sent in answer to mine:--

"For Southey I have, as well as you, great respect, and when he will let me, great admiration; but he is a most provoking fellow, and at least as conceited as his neighbour Wordsworth. I cannot just trust you with his Roderick; but I shall be extremely happy to talk over

that and other kindred subjects with you, for I am every way disposed to give Southey a lavish allowance of praise, and few things would give me greater pleasure than to find he had afforded me a fair opportunity. But I must do my duty according to my own apprehensions of it."

'I supped with him last night, but there was so many people that I got but little conversation with him, but what we had was solely about you and Wordsworth. I suppose you have heard what a crushing review he has given the latter. I still found him persisting in his first asseveration, that it was heavy; but what was my pleasure to find that he had only got to the seventeenth division. I assured him he had the marrow of the thing to come at as yet, and in that I was joined by Mr. Alison. There was at the same time a Lady M--- joined us at the instant; short as her remark was, it seemed to make more impression on Jeffrey than all our arguments:-"Oh, I do love Southey!" that was all.

'I have no room to tell you more. But I beg that you will not do any thing, nor publish any thing that will nettle Jeffrey for the present, knowing as you do how omnipotent he is with the fashionable world, and seemingly so well disposed toward you.

'I am ever your's most truly, 'JAMES Hogg.

'I wish the Notes may be safe enough. I never looked at them. I wish these large quartos were all in hell burning.' The reader will be as much amused as I was with poor Hogg's earnest desire that I would not say any thing which might tend to frustrate his friendly intentions.

But what success the Shepherd met Is to the world a secret yet.

There can be no reason, however, for withholding what was said in my reply of the crushing review which had been given to Mr. Wordsworth's poem:—
'He crush the Excursion!! Tell him he might as easily crush Skiddaw!'

Keswick, June 15, 1838.

THALABA THE DESTROYER

Ποιημάτων άκρατης ή έλευθερία, καὶ νύμος είς, τὸ δύξαν τῷ ποιητη. Lucian, Quomodo Hist. Scribenda.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

In the continuation of the Arabian Tales, the Domdaniel is mentioned; a seminary for evil magicians, under the roots of the sca. From this seed the present romance has grown. Let me not be supposed to prefer the rhythm in which it is written, abstractedly considered, to the regular blank verse; the noblest measure, in my judgement, of which our admirable language is capable. For the following Poem I have preferred it, because it suits the varied subject: it is the Arabesque ornament of an Arabian tale.

The dramatic sketches of Dr. Savers. a volume which no lover of poetry will recollect without pleasure, induced me, when a young versifier, to practise in this rhythm. I felt that while it gave the poet a wider range of expression, it satisfied the ear of the reader. It were

enumerating the various feet which it admits: it is only needful to observe that no two lines are employed in sequence which can be read into one. Two sixsyllable lines, it will perhaps beanswered, compose an Alexandrine: the truth is. that the Alexandrine, when harmonious, is composed of two six-syllable lines.

One advantage this metre assuredly possesses,-the dullest reader cannot distort it into discord: he may read it prosaically, but its flow and fall will still be perceptible. Verse is not enough favoured by the English reader: perhaps this is owing to the obtrusiveness. the regular Jew's harp twing-twang, of what has been foolishly called heroic measure. I do not wish the improvisatorè tune :- but something that denotes the sense of harmony, something like the accent of feeling,-like the tone which easy to make a parade of learning, by every poet necessarily gives to poetry.

Cintra, October, 1800.

THALABA THE DESTROYER

THE FIRST BOOK

... Worse and worse, young Orphane, be thy payne, If thou due vengeance doe forbeare, Till guiltie blood her guerdon do obtavne. Facry Queen, B. ii. Can. I.

How beautiful is night! A dewy freshness fills the silent air; No mist obscures, nor cloud, nor speck, nor stain.

Breaks the serene of heaven: In full-orb'd glory yonder Moon divine Rolls through the dark blue depths.

Beneath her steady ray The desert-circle spreads, Like the round ocean, girdled with the sky. How beautiful is night!

Who at this untimely hour Wanders o'er the desert sands? No station is in view, Norpalm-grove, islanded amid the waste. The mother and her child, [boy, The widow'd mother and the fatherless They at this untimely hour Wander o'er the desert sands.

Alas! the setting sun
Saw Zeinab in her bliss, 20
Hodeirah's wife beloved.
Alas! the wife beloved,
The fruitful mother late,
Whom when the daughters of Arabia
named.

named,
They wish'd their lot like hers,
She wanders o'er the desert sands
A wretched widow now;
The fruitful mother of so fair a race,
With only one preserved,
She wanders o'er the wilderness. 30

4

No tear relieved the burthen of her heart;
Stunn'd with the heavy wee, she felt
like one [blood.
Half-waken'd from a midnight dream of
But sometimes when the boy
Would wet her hand with tears,
And, looking up to her fix'd countenance,
Sob out the name of Mother! then
she groan'd. [eyes
At length collecting, Zeinab turn'd her
To heaven, and praised the Lord;
'He gave, he takes away!' 40
The pious sufferer cried,
'The Lord our God is good!'

5

'Good is He!' quoth the boy:
'Why are my brethren and my sisters
slain?

Why is my father kill'd?
Did ever we neglect our prayers,
Or ever lift a hand unclean to Heaven?
Did ever stranger from our tent
Unwelcomed turn away?
Mother, He is not good!' 50

ti

Then Zeinab beat her breast in agony,
'O God, forgive the child!
He knows not what he says;

Thou know'st I did not teach him thoughts like these;
O Prophet, pardon him!'

7

She had not wept till that assuaging prayer, . . [then,

The fountains of her grief were open'd And tears relieved her heart.

She raised her swimming eyes to Heaven,
'Allah, thy will be done! 60

Beneath the dispensations of that will I groan, but murmur not.

A day will come, when all things that are dark

Will be made clear;..then shall I know, O Lord!

Why in thy mercy thou hast stricken me; Then see and understand what now My heart believes and feels.'

3

Young Thalaba in silence heard reproof;
His brow in manly frowns was knit,
With manly thoughts his heart was full.
'Tell me who slew my father?' cried
the boy.
Zeinab replied and said, [foe.

'I knew not that there lived thy father's
The blessings of the poor for him
Went daily up to Heaven;
In distant lands the traveller told his
praise;...

I did not think there lived Hodeirah's enemy.'

9

'But I will hunt him through the world!'
Young Thalaba exclaim'd. 80
'Already I can bend my father's bow;
Soon will my arm have strength
To drive the arrow-feathers to his heart.'

10

Zeinab replied, 'O Thalaba, my child, Thou lookest on to distant days, And we are in the desert, far from men!

Not till that moment her afflicted heart
Had leisure for the thought.
She cast her eyes around,
Alas! no tents were there
Beside the bending sands,

Beside the bending sands,
No palm-tree rose to spot the wilderness;
The dark blue sky closed round,

And rested like a dome Upon the circling waste. She cast her eyes around,

Famine and Thirst were there;
And then the wretched Mother bow'd
her head,

And wept upon her child.

12

A sudden cry of wonder
From Thalaba aroused her;
She raised her head, and saw
Where high in air a stately palace rose.
Amid a grove embower'd
Stood the prodigious pile;
Trees of such ancient majesty
Tower'd not on Yemen's happy hills,
Nor crown'd the lofty brow of Lebanon:
Fabric so vast, so lavishly enrich'd,
For Idol, or for Tyrant, never yet 110
Raised the slave race of man,
In Rome, nor in the elder Babylon,
Nor old Persepolis,

Hymn'd Eleutherian Jove.
13

Nor where the family of Greece

Here studding azure tablatures
And ray'd with feeble light,
Star-like the ruby and the diamond
shone:

Here on the golden towers
The yellow moon-beam lay, 120
Here with white splendour floods the silver wall.

Less wondrous pile and less magnificent Sennamar built at Hirah, though his art Seal'd with one stone the ample edifice,

And made its colours, like the serpent's skin, [Lord,

Play with a changeful beauty: him, its Jealous lest after effort might surpass The then unequall'd palace, from its height

Dash'd on the pavement down.

14

They enter'd, and through aromatic paths 130

Wondering they went along.
At length, upon a mossy bank,
Beneath a tall mimosa's shade,
Which o'er him bent its living canopy,

They saw a man reclined. Young he appear'd, for on his cheek there shone

The morning glow of health,
And the brown beard curl'd close around
his chin.

He slept, but at the sound
Of coming feet awaking, fix'd his eyes
In wonder, on the wanderer and her
child. 141

'Forgive us,' Zeinab cried,

'Distress hath made us bold.

Relieve the widow and the fatherless!

Blessed are they who succour the
distrest;

For them hath God appointed Paradise.'

15

He heard, and he look'd up to heaven, And tears ran down his cheeks:

'It is a human voice!
I thank thee, O my God!.. 150

How many an age hath pass'd Since the sweet sounds have visited my ear!

> I thank thee, O my God, It is a human voice!'

> > 16

To Zeinab turning then, he said, 'O mortal, who art thou,

Whose gifted eyes have pierced
The shadow of concealment that hath
wrapt

These bowers, so many an age,
From eye of mortal man?
For countless years have pass'd,
And never foot of man
The bowers of Irem trod,..
Save only I, a miserable wretch
From Heaven and Earth shut out!

17

Fearless, and scarce surprised,
For grief in Zeinab's soul
All other feebler feelings overpower'd,
She answer'd, 'Yesterday
I was a wife beloved,
The fruitful mother of a numerous race.

The fruitful mother of a numerous rac
I am a widow now,
Of all my offspring this alone is left.
Praise to the Lord our God,
He gave, He takes away!

18

Then said the stranger, 'Not by Heaven unseen, [reach'd Nor in unguided wanderings, hast thou This secret place, be sure! Nor for light purpose is the veil, That from the Universe has long shut out 180

These ancient bowers, withdrawn.

Hear thou my words, O mortal, in thine
heart

Treasure what I shall tell;
And when amid the world
Thou shalt emerge again,
Repeat the warning tale. [make
Why have the fathers suffer'd, but to
The children wisely safe?

19

'The Paradise of Irem this, 189
And this that wonder of the world,
The Palace built by Shedad in his pride.
Alas! in the days of my youth,
The hum of mankind

Was heard in yon wilderness waste;
O'er all the winding sands
The tents of Ad were pitch'd;
Happy Al-Ahkâf then,
For many and brave were her sons,
Her daughters were many and fair.

20

'My name was Aswad then . . 200
Alas! alas! how strange
The sound so long unheard!
Of noble race I came,
One of the wealthy of the earth my sire.
An hundred horses in my father's stall,
Stood ready for his will;
Numerous his robes of silk:

Numerous his robes of silk; The number of his camels was not known. These were my heritage,

O God! thy gifts were these; 210
But better had it been for Aswad's soul
Had he ask'd alms on earth
And begg'd the crumbs which from his
table fell,

So he had known thy Word.

21

'Boy, who hast reach'd my solitude,
Fear the Lord in the days of thy youth!
My knee was never taught
To bend before my God;
My voice was never taught
To shape one holy prayer.

We worshipp'd Idols, wood and stone,
The work of our own foolish hands,
We worshipp'd in our foolishness.

Vainly the Prophet's voice

Its frequent warning raised,
"REPENT AND BE FORGIVEN!"..
We mock'd the messenger of God,
We mock'd the Lord, long-suffering,
slow to wrath.

22

'A mighty work the pride of Shedad plann'd,

Here in the wilderness to form 230 A Garden more surpassing fair Than that before whose gate
The lightning of the Cherub's fiery sword
Waves wide to bar access,
Since Adam, the transgressor, thence
was driven.
Here, too, would Shedad build
A kingly pile sublime,
The palace of his pride.
For this exhausted mines
Supplied their golden store; 240
For this the central caverns gave their
gems;

For this the woodman's axe

Open'd the cedar forest to the sun:

The silkworm of the East

Spun her sepulchral egg;

The hunter Afri [rage;

Provok'd the danger of the Elephant's

The Ethiop, keen of scent,

Detects the cbony, 249

That deep-inearth'd, and hating light,

A leafless tree and barren of all fruit,

grain. [pile;
Such were the treasures lavish'd in you
Ages have pass'd away,
And never mortal eye
Gazed on their vanity.

With darkness feeds its boughs of raven

23

'The Garden, . . eopious springs
Blest that delightful spot,
And every flower was planted there
That makes the gale of evening sweet.
He spake, and bade the full-grown forest
rise, 261

His own creation; should the King
Wait for slow Nature's work?
All trees that bend with luscious fruit,
Or wave with feathery boughs,
Or point their spiring heads to heaven,
Or spreading wide their shadowy
arms, [noon, . . .
Invite the traveller to repose at

Invite the traveller to repose at Hither, uprooted with their native soil,

The labour and the pain of multitudes,...

Mature in beauty, bore them. 271

Here, frequent in the walks

The marble statue stood

Of heroes and of chiefs.

The trees and flowers remain,

By Nature's care perpetuate and selfsown. [trace

The marble statues long have lost all

Of heroes and of chiefs;

Huge shapeless stones they lie,

9.1

()'ergrown with many a flower. 280

'The work of pride went on;
Often the Prophet's voice
Denounced impending woe:
We mock'd at the words of the Seer,
We mock'd at the wrath of the Lord.
A long-continued drought first troubled
us:

Three years no cloud had form'd,
Three years no rain had fallen;
The wholesome herb was dry,
The corn matured not for the food of
man,
290

The wells and fountains fail'd.

O hard of heart, in whom the punishment
Awoke no sense of guilt!

Headstrong to ruin, obstinately blind,
We to our Idols still applied for aid;
Sakia we invoked for rain,

We called on Razeka for food;
They did not hear our prayers, they
could not hear!
No cloud appear'd in Heaven.

No cloud appear'd in Heaven,
No nightly dews came down. 300

25

Then to the Place of Concourse messengers [came, Were sent, to Mecca, where the nations Round the Red Hillock kneeling, to implore

God in his favour'd place.

We sent to call on God; [earth Ah fools! unthinking that from all the The soul ascends to him.

We sent to call on God;

Ah fools! to think the Lord

Would hear their prayers abroad, 310

Who made no prayers at home!

26

'Meantime the work of pride went on, And still before our Idols, wood and stone,

We bow'd the impious knee.
"Turn, men of Ad, and call upon the Lord."

The Prophet Houd exclaim'd;
"Turn men of Ad, and look to Heaven,
And fly the wrath to come."—
We mock'd the Prophet's words;...
"Now dost thou dream, old man, 320
Or art thou drunk with wine?
Future woe and wrath to come,
Still thy prudent voice forebodes;
When it comes will we believe,
Till it comes will we go on
In the way our fathers went.
Now are thy words from God?
Or dost thou dream, old man,
Or art thou drunk with wine?"

27

'So spake the stubborn race, 330
The unbelieving ones.
I too, of stubborn unbelieving heart,
Heard him, and heeded not.
It chanced, my father went the way of
man,

He perish'd in his sins.
The funeral rites were duly paid,
We bound a Camel to his grave,
And left it there to die,
So if the resurrection came
Together they might rise.
I pass'd my father's grave,
I heard the Camel moan.
She was his favourite beast,

340

mount. [her eyes

Her limbs were lean with famine, and

Ghastly and sunk and dim.

She knew me as I pass'd,

She stared me in the face;

My heart was touch'd, . . had it been
human else? 350

I thought that none was near, and cut
her bonds,

And drove her forth to liberty and life.

The Prophet Houd had seen;

He lifted up his voice

One who had carried me in infancy, The first that by myself I learn'd to

He lifted up his voice,

"Blessed art thou, young man,
Blessed art thou, O Aswad, for the deed!

In the Day of Visitation,
In the fearful hour of Judgement,
God will remember thee!"

28

'The Day of Visitation was at hand, 360 The fearful hour of Judgement hastened

Lo! Shedad's mighty pile complete, The Palace of his pride.

Would ye behold its wonders, enter in!

I have no heart to visit it.

Time hath not harm'd the eternal monument;

Time is not here, nor days, nor months, nor years,

An everlasting Now of solitude!.

29

'Ye must have heard their fame;
Or likely ye have seen 370
The mighty Pyramids, . . [lived
For sure those aweful piles have overThe feeble generations of mankind.

What though unmoved they bore the deluge weight,

Survivors of the ruined world?

What though their founder fill'd with
miracles [vaults?

And wealth miraculous their spacious

Compared with yonder fabric, and they shrink

The baby wonders of a woman's work.

30

'Here emerald columns o'er the marble courts 380 Shed their green rays as when amid a

Shed their green rays, as when amid a shower [corn.

The sun shines loveliest on the vernal Here Shedad bade the sapphire floor be laid.

As though with feet divine
To tread on azure light, [ment.
Like the blue pavement of the firmaHere self-suspended hangs in air,
As its pure substance loathed material
touch,

The living carbuncle;
Sun of the lofty dome, 390
Darkness hath no dominion o'er its
beams;

Intense it glows, an ever-flowing spring
Of radiance, like the day-flood in its
source.

31

'Impious! the Trees of vegetable gold Such as in Eden's groves

Yet innocent it grew;

Impious! he made his boast, though
Heaven had hid

So deep the baneful ore, [him, That they should branch and bud for That art should force their blossoms and their fruit, 400

And re-create for him whate'er Was lost in Paradisc.

Therefore at Shedad's voice
Here tower'd the palm, a silver trunk,
The fine gold net-work growing out
Loose from its rugged boughs.
Tall as the cedar of the mountain, here

Tall as the cedar of the mountain, here Rose the gold branches, hung with emerald leaves. Blossom'd with pearls, and rich with ruby fruit.

32

'O Ad! my country! evil was the day
That thy unhappy sons 411

Crouch'd at this Nimrod's throne,

And placed him on the pedestal of power, And laid their liberties beneath his feet, Robbing their children of the heritance

Their fathers handed down.

What was to him the squander'd wealth?

What was to him the burthen of the land.

The lavish'd misery?

He did but speak his will, 420
And, like the blasting Siroc of the sands,
The ruin of the royal voice

Found its way every-where.

I marvel not that he, whose power No earthly law, no human feeling curb'd, Mock'd at the living God!

33

'And now the King's command went forth [young,

Among the people, bidding old and Husband and wife, the master and the slave.

All the collected multitudes of Ad, 430 Here to repair, and hold high festival, That he might see his people, they behold Their King's magnificence and power.

The day of festival arrived; Hither they came, the old man and the boy,

Husband and wife, the master and the slave,

Hither they came. From yonder high tower top,

The loftiest of the Palace, Shedad look'd Down on his tribe: their tents on yonder sands

Rose like the countless billows of the sea; 440

Their tread and voices like the ocean roar,

One deep confusion of tumultuous sounds.

They saw their King's magnificence, beheld [domes

His palace sparkling like the Angel
Of Paradise, his Garden like the bowers
Of early Eden, and they shouted out,
"Great is the King! a God upon
the earth!"

34

'Intoxicate with joy and pride, He heard their blasphemies: And in his wantonness of heart he bade The Prophet Houd be brought; 451 And o'er the marble courts, And o'er the gorgeous rooms Glittering with gems and gold. He led the Man of God. "Is not this a stately pile?" Cried the monarch in his joy. "Hath ever eye beheld. Hath ever thought conceived. Place more magnificent? 460 Houd, they say that Heaven imparteth Words of wisdom to thy lips: Look at the riches round. And value them aright, If so thy wisdom can."

35

'The Prophet heard his vaunt,
And, with an aweful smile, he answer'd
him,

"O Shedad! only in the hour of death
We learn to value things like these
aright."

36

"Hast thou a fault to find 470 In all thine eyes have seen?"
With unadmonished pride, the King exclaim'd.
"Yea!" said the Man of God;

"Yea!" said the Man of God;
"The walls are weak, the building ill secure.

Azrael can enter in!
The Sarsar can pierce through,
The Icy Wind of Death."

37

'I was beside the Monarch when he spake;

Gentle the Prophet spake,
But in his eye there dwelt 480
A sorrow that disturb'd me while I gazed.
The countenance of Shedad fell,
And anger sat upon his paler lips.
He to the high tower-top the Prophet led,
And pointed to the multitude,

And as again they shouted out,
"Great is the King! a God upon the
Earth!"

With dark and threatful smile to Houd he turn'd,

"Say they aright, O Prophet? is the King

Great upon earth, a God among mankind?" 490

The Prophet answer'd not; Over that infinite multitude He roll'd his ominous eyes,

And tears which could not be supprest gush'd forth.

38

'Sudden an uproar rose,
A cry of joy below;
"The messenger is come!
Kaïl from Mecca comes,
He brings the boon obtain'd!"

39

'Forth as we went we saw where overhead 500
There hung a deep black cloud,
To which the multitude
With joyful eyes look'd up,
And blest the coming rain.
The Messenger addrest the King
And told his tale of joy.

"To Mecca I repair'd, By the Red Hillock knelt, And call'd on God for rain.

My prayer ascended, and was heard;
Three clouds appear'd in heaven, 511
One white, and like the flying cloud of
noon. [beams,

One red, as it had drunk the evening One black and heavywith its load of rain. A voice went forth from Heaven,

'Choose, Kaïl, of the three!'
I thank'd the gracious Power,

And chose the black cloud, heavy with its wealth."

"Right! right!" a thousand tongues exclaim'd,

And all was merriment and joy. 520

41

'Then stood the Prophet up, and cried aloud,

"Woe, woe to Irem! woe to Ad!

DEATH is gone up into her palaces!

Woe! woe! a day of guilt and punishment:

A day of desolation!"—As he spake, His large eye roll'd in horror, and so deep His tone, it seem'd some Spirit from within

Breathed through his moveless lips the unearthly voice.

42

'All looks were turn'd to him. "O Ad!" he cried,

"Dearnative land, by all remembrances
Of childhood, by all joys of manhood
dear:
531

O Vale of many Waters; morn and night [grave

My age must groan for you, and to the Go down in sorrow. Thou wilt give thy fruits, [will ripen,

But who shall gather them? thy grapes

But who shall tread the wine-press? Fly the wrath, [alive!

Ye who would live and save your souls

For strong is his right hand that

bends the Bow.

The Arrows that he shoots are sharp, And err not from their aim!" 540

43

'With that a faithful few
Prest through the throng to join him.
Then arose

Mockery and mirth; "Go, bald head!"
and they mix'd [once
Curses with laughter. He set forth, yet
Look'd back:.. his eye fell on me, and

he call'd [fied;...
"Aswad!"...it startled me...it terri"Aswad!" again he call'd and

" Aswad!" again he call'd, . . and
I almost [soon!

Had follow'd him. . . O moment fled too O moment irrecoverably lost!

The shouts of mockery made a coward of me; 550

He went, and I remain'd, in fear of Man!

44

'He went, and darker grew
The deepening cloud above.
At length it open'd, and . . O God!
O God!

There were no waters there!
There fell no kindly rain!
The Sarsar from its womb went forth,
The Icy Wind of Death.

45

'They fell around me; thousands fell around,

The King and all his people fell; 560
All! all! they perish'd all!
I.. only I.. was left.

There came a Voice to me and said,
" In the Day of Visitation,
In the fearful hour of Judgement,

God hath remember'd thee."

'When from an agony of prayer I rose,
And from the scene of death
Attempted to go forth,
The way was open, I could see 570
No barrier to my steps.
But round these bowers the Arm of God

Had drawn a mighty chain, A barrier that no human force might

break.

Twice I essay'd to pass;

With that a Voice was heard,

"O Aswad, be content, and bless the

One charitable deed hath saved
Thy soul from utter death.
O Aswad, sinful man! 580
When by long penitence
Thou feel'st thy soul prepared
Breathe up the wish to die,
And Azrael comes in answer to thy
prayer."

47

'A miserable man

From Earth and Heaven shut out,

I heard the dreadful Voice.

I look'd around my prison-place,

The bodies of the dead were there,

Where'er I look'd they lay, 590

They moulder'd, moulder'd here,...

Their very bones have crumbled into

dust,

So many years have pass'd!

So many years have pass'd!
So many weary ages have gone by!
And still I linger here, [sins,
Still groaning with the burthen of my
Not yet have dared to breathe
The prayer to be released.

48

'Oh! who can tell the unspeakables misery

Of solitude like this! 600

No sound hath ever reach'd my ear

Save of the passing wind,

The fountain's everlasting flow,
The forest in the gale,
The pattering of the shower,
Sounds dead and mournful all.
No bird hath ever closed her wing
Upon these solitary bowers,
No insect sweetly buzz'd amid these
groves,

From all things that have life, 610
Save only me, conceal'd.
This Tree alone, that o'er my head
Hangs down its hospitable boughs,
And bends its whispering leaves
As though to welcome me,
Scems to partake of life;
I love it as my friend, my only friend!

49

'I know not for what ages I have dragg'd
This miserable life;
How often I have seen 620
These ancient trees renew'd;
What countless generations of mankind
Have risen and fallen asleep,
And I remain the same!
My garment hath not waxen old,
And the sole of my shoe is not worn.

50

'Sinner that I have been,
I dare not offer up a prayer to die.
O merciful Lord God!..
But when it is thy will, 630
But when I have atoned
For mine iniquities,
And sufferings have made pure
My soul with sin defiled,
Release me in thine own good time;...
I will not cease to praise thee, O my
God!'

51

Silence ensued awhile;
Then Zeinab answer'd him;
'Blessed art thou, O Aswad! for the
Lord,
Who saved thy soul from Hell, 640

Will call thee to him in his own good time.

And would that when my soul
Breathed up the wish to die,
Azrael might visit me!
Then would I follow where my babes
are gone,

And join Hodeirah now!

52

She ceased; and the rushing of wings Was heard in the stillness of night, And Azrael, the Death-Angel, stood before them.

His countenance was dark, 650
Solemn, but not severe,
It awed, but struck no terror to the heart.
'Zeinab, thy wish is heard!
Aswad, thine hour is come!'
They fell upon the ground and blest the voice:

And Azrael from his sword Let fall the drops of bitterness and death.

53

'Me too! me too!' young Thalaba
exclaim'd,
As wild with grief he kiss'd
His Mother's livid hand,
660
His Mother's livid lips;
'O Angel! take me too!'

54

'Son of Hodeirah!' the Death-Angel said,

'It is not yet the hour.

Son of Hodeirah, thou art chosen forth
To do the will of Heaven;
To avenge thy father's death,
The murder of thy race;
To work the mightiest enterprize
That mortal man hath wrought. 670
Live! and REMEMBER DESTINY

HATH MARK'D THEE FROM MANKIND!

55

He ceased, and he was gone.
Young Thalaba look'd round, . .
The Palace and the groves were seen no
more.

He stood amid the Wilderness, alone.

THE SECOND BOOK

Sintlicet expertes vitae sensusque, capessunt Jussa tamen superum venti.

Mambruni Constantinus.

1

Not in the desert,
Son of Hodeirah,
Thou art abandon'd!
The co-existent fire, [for thee,
Which in the Dens of Darkness burnt
Burns yet, and yet shall burn.

2

In the Domdaniel caverns,
Under the Roots of the Ocean,
Met the Masters of the Spell.
Before them in the vault, ro
Blazing unfuel'd from its floor of rock,
Ten magic flames arose.
'Burn, mystic fires;' Abdaldar cried;

'Burn, mystic fires;' Abdaldar cried;
'Burn while Hodeirah's dreaded race exist.

This is the appointed hour, [night.' The hour that shall secure these dens of

3

'Dim they burn!' exclaim'd Lobaba;
'Dim they burn, and now they waver!
Okba lifts the arm of death:
They waver,.. they go out!' 20

4

'Curse on his hasty hand!'
Khawla exclaim'd in wrath,
The woman-fiend exclaim'd, [fail'd!
'Curse on his hasty hand, the fool hath
Eight only are gone out.'

A Teraph stood against the cavern-side, A new-born infant's head. Which Khawla at its hour of birth had

seized. And from the shoulders wrung. It stood upon a plate of gold, 30

An unclean Spirit's name inscrib'd beneath.

The cheeks were deathy dark, Dark the dead skin upon the hairless skull:

The lips were bluey pale; Only the eyes had life, They gleam'd with demon light.

'Tell me!' quoth Khawla, 'is the Fire gone out

That threats the Masters of the Spell?' The dead lips moved and spake, 'The Fire still burns that threats 40 The Masters of the Spell.'

'Curse on thee, Okba!' Khawla cried, As to the den the Sorcerer came; He bore the dagger in his hand, Red from the murder of Hodeirah's race. 'Behold those unextinguish'd flames! The Fire still burns that threats The Masters of the Spell! Okba, wert thou weak of heart? Okba, wert thou blind of eye? 50 Thy fate and ours were on the lot, And we believ'd the lying Stars. That said thy hand might seize the auspicious hour!

Thou hast let slip the reins of Destiny, . . Curse thee, curse thee, Okba!'

The Murderer, answering, said, 'O versed in all enchanted lore. Thou better knowest Okba's soul! Eight blows I struck, eight home-driven blows.

Needed no second stroke რი From this envenom'd blade. Ye frown at me as if the will had fail'd: As if ye did not know My double danger from Hodeirah's race, The deeper hate I feel, The stronger motive that inspir'd my Ye frown as if my hasty fault, My ill-directed blow.

Had spared the enemy; And not the Stars that would not give. And not your feeble spells That could not force, the sign Which of the whole was he.

Did ye not bid me strike them all? Said ye not root and branch should be destroy'd?

I heard Hodeirah's dving groan, I heard his Children's shrick of death, And sought to consummate the work: But o'er the two remaining lives A cloud unpierceable had risen, A cloud that mock'd my searching eyes. I would have probed it with the

The dagger was repell'd; A Voice came forth and said, "Son of Perdition, cease! Thou canst not change

dagger-point,

What in the Book of Destiny is written."

Khawla to the Teraph turn'd, 'Tell me where the Prophet's hand Hides our destined enemy?' The dead lips spake again, 90 'I view the seas, I view the land, I search the Ocean and the Earth! Not on Ocean is the Boy, Not on Earth his steps are seen.'

'A mightier power than we,' Lobaba cried 'Protects our destined foe. Look! look! one Fire burns dim! It quivers! it goes out!'

It quiver'd, it was quench'd.

One Flame alone was left, roo
A pale blue Flame that trembled on the
floor, [edge
A hovering light, upon whose shrinking
The darkness seem'd to press.
Stronger it grew, and spread
Its lucid swell around,
Extending now where all the ten had
stood

With lustre more than all.

At that portentous sight The Children of Evil trembled. And terror smote their souls. 110 Over the den the Fire Its fearful splendour cast, The broad base rolling up in wavy streams, [spreads Bright as the summer lightning when it Its glory o'er the midnight heaven. The Teraph's eyes were dimm'd, Which like two twinkling stars Shone in the darkness late. The Sorcerers on each other gazed, And every face, all pale with fear, 120 And ghastly, in that light was seen Like a dead man's by the sepulchral lamp.

13

Even Khawla, fiercest of the enchanter brood,

Not without effort drew
Her fear-suspended breath.
Anon a deeper rage
Inflamed her reddening eye.
'Mighty is thy power, Mahommed!'
Loud in blasphemy she cried;
'But Eblis would not stoop to Man,
When Man, fair-statured as the stately

From his Creator's hand Was undefiled and pure.

Thou art mighty, O Son of Abdallah!

But who is he of woman born

That shall vie with the might of Eblis?

That shall rival the Prince of the

Merning?'

14

She said, and raised her skinny hand
As in defiance to high Heaven,
And stretch'd her long lean finger forth,
And spake aloud the words of power.
The Spirits heard her call

The Spirits heard her call,
And lo! before her stands
Her Demon Minister.

'Spirit!' the Enchantress cried,
'Where lives the Boy, coeval with whose
life

Yon magic Fire must burn?'

15

DEMON

Mistress of the mighty Spell,

Not on Ocean, not on Earth,

Only eyes that view 150

Allah's glory-throne,

See his hiding-place. [learn.

From some believing Spirit, ask and

16

'Bring the dead Hodeirah here,'
Khawla cried, 'and he shall tell!'
The Demon heard her bidding, and was
gone.

A moment pass'd, and at her feet
Hodeirah's corpse was laid;
His hand still held the sword he grasp'd
in death,

The blood not yet had clotted on his wound.

17

The Sorceress look'd, and with a smile
That kindled to more fiendishness
Her hideous features, cried,
'Where art thou, Hodeirah, now?
Is thy soul in Zemzem-well?
Is it in the Eden groves?

Waits it for the judgement-blast In the trump of Israfil? Is it, plumed with silver wings, Underneath the throne of God? Even though beneath His throne, Hodeirah, thou shalt hear Thou shalt obey my voice!'

She said, and mutter'd charms which Hell in fear.

And Heaven in horror heard. Soon the stiff eye-balls roll'd,

The muscles with convulsive motion shook. ther soul The white lips quiver'd. Khawla saw,

Exulted, and she cried, 'Prophet! behold my power! 180

Not even death secures Thy slaves from Khawla's spell!

Where, Hodeirah, is thy child ?'

Hodeirah groan'd and closed his eyes, As if in the night and the blindness of death

He would have hid himself.

'Speak to my question!' she exclaim'd, 'Or in that mangled body thou shalt live Ages of torture! Answer me! Where can we find the boy?' 1 00

'God! God!' Hodeirah cried, 'Release me from this life. From this intolerable agony!'

'Speak!' cried the Sorceress, and she snatch'd

A Viper from the floor And with the living reptile lash'd his neck.

Wreath'd round him with the blow, The reptile tighter drew her folds And raised her wrathful head. And fix'd into his face 200

Her deadly teeth and shed Poison in every wound. [prayer, In vain! for Allah heard Hodeirah's And Khawla on a corpse

Had wreak'd her baffled rage.

The fated Fire moved on, [flames. And round the Body wrapt its funeral The flesh and bones in that portentous pile

> Consumed; the Sword alone, Circled with fire, was left. 210

> > 23

Where is the Boy for whose hand it is destined? [wield Where the Destroyer who one day shall The Sword that is circled with fire? Race accursed, try your charms! Masters of the mighty Spell, Mutter o'er your words of power! Ye can shatter the dwellings of man; Ye can open the womb of the rock; Ye can shake the foundations of earth. But not the Word of God: But not one letter can ye change Of what his Will hath written.

Who shall seek through Araby Hodeirah's dreaded son? They mingle the Arrows of Chance, The lot of Abdaldar is drawn. Thirteen moons must wax and wane Ere the Sorcerer quit his quest. He must visit every tribe That roam the desert wilderness, 230 Or dwell beside perennial streams; Nor leave a solitary tent unsearch'd, Till he hath found the Boy, . . The dreaded Boy, whose blood alone Can quench that fated Fire.

A crystal ring Abdaldar wore; The powerful gem condensed Primeval dews, that upon Caucasus Felt the first winter's frost.

Ripening there it lay beneath 240
Rock above rock, and mountain ice uppiled [assumed,
On mountain, till the incumbent mass
So huge its bulk, the Ocean's azure huc.

26

With this he sought the inner den
Where burnt the Eternal Fire.
Like waters gushing from some channell'd rock [a chasm
Full through a narrow opening, from
The Eternal Fire stream'd up.
No eye beheld the spring
Of that up-flowing Flame, 250
Which blazed self-nurtured, and for ever,

It was no mortal element; the Abyss Supplied it, from the fountains at the first [and glows Prepared. In the heart of earth it lives Her vital heat, till, at the day decreed, The voice of God shall let its billows loose, To deluge o'er with no abating flood Our consummated World; Which must from that day in infinity Through endless ages roll, 260 A penal orb of Fire.

27

Unturban'd and unsandal'd there,
Abdaldar stood before the Flame,
And held the Ring beside, and spake
The language that the Elements obey.
The obedient Flame detach'd a portion
forth, [densed,
Which, in the crystal entering, was conGem of the gem, its living Eye of fire.
When the hand that wears the spell
Shall touch the destined Boy, 270
Then shall that Eye be quench'd,
And the freed Element
Fly to its sacred and remember'd Spring.

 28

Now go thy way, Abdaldar! Servant of Eblis. Over Arabia
Seek the Destroyer!
Over the sands of the scorching Tehama,
Over the waterless mountains of Naÿd;
In Arud pursue him, and Yemen the
happy, 280
And Hejaz, the country beloved by
believers,
Over Arabia,
Servant of Eblis,
Seek the Destroyer!

29

From tribe to tribe, from town to town, From tent to tent, Abdaldar pass'd. Him every morn the all-beholding Eye Saw from his couch, unhallow'd by a

prayer,

Rise to the scent of blood;
And every night lie down, 250
That rankling hope within him, that by
day [sleep,
Goaded his steps, still stinging him in
And startling him with vain accomplishment

From visions still the same.

Many a time his wary hand
To many a youth applied the Ring;
And still the imprison'd Fire
Within its crystal socket lay comprest,
Impatient to be free.

30

At length to the cords of a tent, 300 That were stretch'd by an Island of Palms,

In the desolate sea of the sands,
The seemly traveller came.
Under a shapely palm,
Herself as shapely, there a Damsel stood;
She held her ready robe,
And look'd towards a Boy,
Who from the tree above,
With one hand clinging to its trunk,

With one hand clinging to its trunk,

Cast with the other down the cluster'd

dates. 31

The Magician approach'd the Tree,
He lean'd on his staff, like a way-faring
man, [his brow.
And the sweat of his travel was seen on
He ask'd for food, and lo!
The Damsel proffers him her lap of dates;
And the Stripling descends, and runs

to the tent,

And brings him forth water, the draught
of delight.

32
Anon the Master of the tent.

The Father of the family,

Came forth, a man in years, of aspect
mild. 320

To the stranger approaching he gave
The friendly saluting of peace,
And bade the skin be spread.

Before the tent they spread the skin,
Under a Tamarind's shade,

Its boughs of beauty far.

That, bending forward, stretch'd

They brought the Traveller rice, With no false colours tinged to tempt the eye,

But white as the new-fallen snow, 330
When never yet the sullying Sun
Hath seen its purity,
Nor the warm zephyr touch'd and
tainted it.

The dates of the grove before their guest They laid, and the luscious fig, And water from the well.

34

The Damsel from the Tamarind tree
Had pluck'd its acid fruit,
And steep'd it in water long;
And whose drank of the cooling draught,
He would not wish for wine. 341
This to their guest the Damsel brought,
And a modest pleasure kindled her
cheek,

When raising from the cup his moisten'd lips, [drank again. The stranger smiled, and praised, and

Whither is gone the Boy?

He had pierced the Melon's pulp,
And closed with wax the wound,
And he had duly gone at morn
And watch'd its ripening rind,
And now all joyfully he brings
The treasure now matured;
His dark eyes sparkling with a boy's
delight,

As out he pours its liquid lusciousness, And proffers to the guest.

36

Abdaldar ate, and he was satisfied:
And now his tongue discoursed
Of regions far remote, [long.
As one whose busy feet had travell'd
The father of the family, 360
With a calm eye and quiet smile,
Sate pleased to hearken him.
The Damsel who removed the meal,
She loiter'd on the way,
And listen'd with full hands
A moment motionless.

37

All eagerly the Boy
Watches the Traveller's lips;
And still the wily man
With seemly kindness, to the eager Boy
Directs his winning tale.
Ah, cursed one! if this be he,
If thou hast found the object of thy

Thy hate, thy bloody aim, . .

Into what deep damnation wilt thou plunge

search.

Thy miserable soul!..

28

Look! how his eye delighted watches thine!..

Look! how his open lips

Gape at the winning tale!..

And nearer now he comes, 380
To lose no word of that delightful talk.

Then, as in familiar mood,

Upon the stripling's arm

The Sorcerer laid his hand,

And the Fire of the Crystal fled.

30

While the sudden shoot of joy
Made pale Abdaldar's cheek,
The Master's voice was heard;
'It is the hour of prayer,..
My children, let us purify ourselves,
And praise the Lord our God!' 391
The Boy the water brought;
After the law they purified themselves,
And bent their faces to the earth in
prayer.

40

All, save Abdaldar; over Thalaba
He stands, and lifts the dagger to destroy.
Before his lifted arm received
Its impulse to descend,
The Blast of the Desert came.
Prostrate in prayer, the pious family
Felt not the Simoom pass.

They rose, and lo! the Sorcerer lying
dead,
Holding the dagger in his blasted hand.

THE THIRD BOOK

Time will produce events of which thou canst have no idea; and he to whom thou gavest no commission, will bring thee unexpected news.—MOALLAKAT, Poem of Tarafat

THALABA

ONEIZA, look! the dead man has a ring, ... Should it be buried with him?

ONEIZA

A wicked man! whate'er is his must
Be wicked too!

THALABA

But see, . . the sparkling stone? How it hath caught the glory of the Sun, And shoots it back again in lines of light!

ONEIZA

Why do you take it from him, Thalaba? And look at it so close? . . it may have charms

To blind, or poison; ... throw it in the grave!

I would not touch it!

THALABA

And around its rim Strange letters...

ONEIZA

Bury it . . oh! bury it!

THALABA

It is not written as the Koran is:
Some other tongue perchance; . . the
accursed man

Said he had been a traveller.

MOATH (coming from the tent)
Thalaba.

What hast thou there?

THALABA

A ring the dead man wore; Perhaps, my father, you can read its meaning.

MOATH

No, Boy; . . the letters are not such as ours.

Heap the sand over it! a wicked man Wears nothing holy.

THALABA

Nay! not bury it!

It may be that some traveller, who shall enter

Our tent, may read it: or if we approach Cities where strangers dwell and learned men.

They may interpret.

30

20

MOATH

It were better hid

Under the desert sands. This wretched man, [purpose Whom God hath smitten in the very

And impulse of his unpermitted crime, Belike was some magician, and these lines Are of the language that the Demons use.

ONEIZA

Bury it! bury it . . dear Thalaba!

MOATH

Such cursed men there are upon the earth, [powers, In league and treaty with the Evil The covenanted enemies of God 40

And of all good; dear purchase have they made [sway,

Of rule and riches, and their life-long Masters, yet slaves of Hell. Beneath the roots

Of Ocean, the Domdaniel caverns lie, Their impious meeting; there they learn the words

Unutterable by man who holds his
hope [and let
Of heaven; there brood the pestilence,
The earthquake loose.

THALABA

And he who would have kill'd me
Was one of these? 50

MOATH

I know not; . . but it may be
That on the Table of Destiny, thy name
Is written their Destroyer, and for this
Thy life by yonder miserable man
So sought, so saved by interfering
Heaven.

THALABA

His ring has some strange power then?

MOATH

Every gem, [science, So sages say, hath virtue; but the Of difficult attainment; some grow pale,

Conscious of poison, or with sudden change 60

Of darkness, warn the wearer; some preserve

From spells, or blunt the hostile weapon's edge;

Some open rocks and mountains, and lay bare [sight

Their buried treasures; others make the Strong to perceive the presence of

those Beings [empty air Through whose pure essence as through

The unaided eye would pass;
And in you stone 1 deem

Some such mysterious quality resides.

THALABA

My father, I will wear it. 70

MOATH Thalaba!

THALABA

In God's name, and the Prophet's! be its power [evil, Good, let it serve the righteous; if for God, and my trust in Him, shall hallow it.

So Thalaba drew on
The written ring of gold.
Then in the hollow grave
They laid Abdaldar's corpse,
And levell'd over him the desert dust.

3

The Sun arose, ascending from beneath
The horizon's circling line.

As Thalaba to his ablutions went,
Lo! the grave open, and the corpse exposed!

It was not that the winds of night
Had swept away the sands which
cover'd it;

For heavy with the undried dew
The desert dust lay dark and close
around; [still

And the night air had been so calm and
It had not from the grove
Shaken a ripe date down.

Amazed to hear the tale,
Forth from the tent came Moath and his
child. [corpse

Awhile he stood contemplating the Silent and thoughtfully;

Then turning, spake to Thalaba, and said, [the abode 'I have heard that there are places by

Of holy men, so holily possess'd,
That should a corpse be laid irreverently

Within their precincts, the insulted ground,

Impatient of pollution, heaves and shakes

The abomination out.

Have then in elder times the happy feet
Of Patriarch, or of Prophet bless'd
the place,

Ishmael, or Houd, or Saleah, or than all, Mahommed, holier name? Or is the man So foul with magic and all blasphemy, That Earth, like Heaven, rejects him? It is best [tent.

Forsake the station. Let us strike our The place is tainted.. and behold The Vulture hovers yonder, and his

scream 110
Chides us that still we scare him from the prey.

So let the accursed one, Torn by that beak obscene, Find fitting sepulchre.'

5

Then from the pollution of death With water they made themselves pure; And Thalaba drew up

And Inalaba Grew up
The fastening of the cords;
And Moath furl'd the tent;
I19
And from the grove of palms Oneiza led
The Camels, ready to receive their load.

ß

The dews had ceased to steam Toward the climbing Sun, When from the Isle of Palms they went their way;

And when the Sun had reach'd his southern height,

As back they turn'd their eyes, The distant Palms arose

Like to the top-sails of some fleet far-off Distinctly seen, where else

The Ocean bounds had blended with the sky; 130

And when the eve came on,

The sight returning reach'd the grove no
more.

They planted the pole of their tent, And they laid them down to repose.

7

At midnight Thalaba started up, For he felt that the ring on his finger was moved:

He call'd on Allah aloud,
And he call'd on the Prophet's name.
Moath arose in alarm:

'What ails thee, Thalaba?' he cried, 140
'Is the robber of night at hand?'

'Dost thou not see,' the youth ex claim'd.

'A Spirit in the tent?'
Moath look'd round and said,
'The moon-beam shines in the tent,
I see thee stand in the light,
And thy shadow is black on the ground.'

8

Thalaba answer'd not.
'Spirit!' he cried, 'what brings thee here?

In the name of the Prophet, speak, 150 In the name of Allah, obey!'

9

He ceased, and there was silence in the tent.

'Dost thou not hear?' quoth Thalaba;
The listening man replied,
'I have the wind that flang

'I hear the wind, that flaps The curtain of the tent.'

'The Ring! the Ring!' the youth exclaim'd.

'For that the Spirit of Evil comes;
By that I see, by that I hear.
In the name of God, I ask thee, 160
Who was he that slew my Father?'

DEMON

Master of the powerful Ring! Okba, the dread Magician, did the deed.

THALABA

Where does the Murderer dwell?

DEMON

In the Domdaniel caverns, Under the Roots of the Ocean.

THALABA

Why were my Father and my brethren slain?

DEMON

We knew from the race of Hodeirah The destined Destroyer would come.

THALABA

Bring me my father's sword! 170

DEMON

A Fire surrounds the fatal sword; No Spirit or Magician's hand Can pierce that fated Flame.

THALABA

Bring me his bow and his arrows!

11

Distinctly Moath heard the youth, and She [watch'd

Who, through the Veil of Separation,
The while in listening terror, and
suspense

All too intent for prayer.

They heard the voice of Thalaba;
But when the Spirit spake, the motion-

less air
Felt not the subtile sounds,
Too fine for mortal sense.

12

On a sudden the rattle of arrows was heard.

And a quiver was laid at the feet of the youth,

And in his hand they saw Hodeirah's bow.

He eyed the bow, he twang'd the string, And his heart bounded to the joyous tone.

Anon he raised his voice and cried,

'Go thy way, and never more,
Evil spirit, haunt our tent! 190
By the virtue of the Ring,
By Mahommed's holier might,
By the holiest name of God,
Thee, and all the Powers of Hell,
I adjure and I command
Never more to trouble us!'

13

Nor ever from that hour Did rebel Spirit on the tent intrude, Such virtue had the Spell.

14

Thus peacefully the vernal years 200 Of Thalaba pass'd on, Till now, without an effort, he could bend

Hodeirah's stubborn bow.

Black were his eyes and bright,

The supply has of health

The sunny hue of health Glow'd on his tawny cheek,

His lip was darken'd by maturing life; Strong were his shapely limbs, his stature tall:

Peerless among Arabian youths was he.

15

Compassion for the child 210 Had first old Moath's kindly heart possess'd.

An orphan, wailing in the wilderness;
But when he heard his tale, his wondrous
tale, [truth,
Told by the Boy, with such eye-speaking

Now with sudden burst of anger,
Now in the agony of tears,
And now with flashes of prophetic joy,
What had been pity became reverence
then.

And, like a sacred trust from Heaven,
The Old Man cherish'd him. 220
Now, with a father's love,
Child of his choice, he loved the Boy,
And, like a father, to the Boy was dear.
Oneiza call'd him brother; and the youth
More fondly than a brother loved
the maid:

The loveliest of Arabian maidens she. How happily the years Of Thalaba went by!

10

It was the wisdom and the will of Heaven,

That in a lonely tent had cast 230
The lot of Thalaba;
There might his soul develope best
Its strengthening energies;
There might he from the world
Keep his heart pure and uncontaminate,
Till at the written hour he should be
found
Fit corrected the Lord without a world

Fit servant of the Lord, without a spot.

17

Years of his youth, how rapidly ye fled
In that beloved solitude!
Is the morn fair, and doth the freshening
breeze 240
Flow with cool current o'er his cheek?
Lo! underneath the broad-leaved
sycamore

With lids half-closed he lies,
Dreaming of days to come.
His dog beside him, in mute blandishment,

Now licks his listless hand; Now lifts an anxious and expectant eye, Courting the wonted caress. 18

Or comes the Father of the Rains From his caves in the uttermost West, Comes he in darkness and storms? 251 When the blast is loud:

When the waters fill
The traveller's tread in the sands;
When the pouring shower
Streams adown the roof;
When the door-curtain hangs in heavier
folds:

When the out-strain'd tent flags loosely:
Within there is the embers' cheerful
glow,

The sound of the familiar voice, 260
The song that lightens toil, . .

Domestic Peace and Comfort are within.
Under the common shelter, on dry sand,
The quiet Camels ruminate their food;
The lengthening cord from Moath falls,
As patiently the Old Man

Entwines the strong palm-fibres; by the hearth

The Damsel shakes the coffee-grains,
That with warm fragrance fill the tent;
And while, with dexterous fingers,
Thalaba 270

Thalaba 270
Shapes the green basket, haply at his feet
Her favourite kidling gnaws the twig,
Forgiven plunderer, for Oneiza's sake.

ıΛ

Or when the winter torrent rolls

Down the deep-channel'd rain-course,
foamingly,

Dark with its mountain spoils,
With bare feet pressing the wet sand,
There wanders Thalaba,
The rushing flow, the flowing roar,

Filling his yielded faculties, 280 A vague, a dizzy, a tumultuous joy.

•)(

Or lingers it a vernal brook Gleaming o'er yellow sands? Beneath the lofty bank reclined,

With idle eye he views its little waves, | Azure and gold adornment? sinks the Quietly listening to the quiet flow; While in the breathings of the stirring gale,

The tall canes bend above. Floating like streamers on the wind Their lank uplifted leaves. 290

. 21

Nor rich, nor poor, was Moath; God hath given I content. Enough, and blest him with a mind No hoarded gold disquieted his dreams: But ever round his station he beheld Camels that knew his voice. And home-birds, grouping at Oneiza's call.

And goats that, morn and eve, Came with full udders to the Damsel's hand.

Dear child! the tent beneath whose shade they dwelt

It was her work; and she had twined 300 His girdle's many hues: And he had seen his robe Grow in Oneiza's loom.

How often, with a memory-mingled joy Which made her Mother live before his sight. I the woof!

He watch'd her nimble fingers thread Or at the hand-mill, when she knelt and toil'd.

Toss'd the thin cake on spreading palm, Or fix'd it on the glowing oven's side With bare wet arm, and safe dexterity.

22

'Tis the cool evening hour: 311 The Tamarind from the dew Sheathes its young fruit, yet green. Before their tent the mat is spread; The Old Man's solemn voice Intones the holy Book. What if beneath no lamp-illumined dome. I truth. Its marble walls bedeck'd with flourish'd

word

With deeper influence from the Imam's voice. 320

Where in the day of congregation, crowds

Perform the duty-task? Their Father is their Priest. The Stars of Heaven their point of praver.

And the blue Firmament The glorious Temple, where they feel The present Deity.

23

Yet through the purple glow of eve Shines dimly the white moon. The slacken'd bow, the quiver, the long

lance. 330

Rest on the pillar of the Tent. Knitting light palm-leaves for her brother's brow.

The dark-eyed damsel sits; The old Man tranquilly Up his curl'd pipe inhales The tranquillizing herb. So listen they the reed of Thalaba, While his skill'd fingers modulate The low, sweet, soothing, melancholy

tones. 24

Or if he strung the pearls of Poesy, 340 Singing with agitated face And eloquent arms, and sobs that reach

> the heart. A tale of love and woe:

Then, if the brightening Moon that lit his face.

In darkness favour'd hers, [say, Oh! even with such a look, as fables The Mother Ostrich fixes on her egg.

> Till that intense affection Kindle its light of life,

Even in such deep and breathless tenderness . 350 Onciza's soul is centred on the youth, So motionless, with such an ardent gaze, . .

Save when from her full eyes She wipes away the swelling tears That dim his image there.

25

She call'd him Brother; was it sisterlove

For which the silver rings
Round her smooth ankles and her tawny
arms, [eye
Shone daily brighten'd? for a brother's
Were her long fingers tinged, 360
As when she trimm'd the lamp,
And through the veins and delicate skin
The light shone rosy? that the darken'd

lids
Gave yet a softer lustre to her eye?
That with such pride she trick'd
Her glossy tresses, and on holy-day
Wreathed the red flower-crown round
Their waves of glossy jet?
How happily the days
Of Thalaba went by!
370
Years of his youth how rapidly ye fled!

26

Yet was the heart of Thalaba
Impatient of repose;
Restless he ponder'd still
The task for him decreed,
The mighty and mysterious work announced.

Day by day, with youthful ardour, He the call of Heaven awaits; And oft in visions, o'er the murderer's head.

He lifts the avenging arm! 380 And oft, in dreams, he sees The Sword that is circled with fire.

27

One morn, as was their wont, in sportive mood, [bow;
The youth and damsel bent Hodeirsh's

For with no feeble hand, nor erring aim, Oneiza could let loose the obedient shaft. With head back-bending, Thalaba Shot up the aimless arrow high in air, Whose line in vain the aching sight pursued,

Lost in the depth of Heaven. 390 'When will the hour arrive,' exclaim'd the youth,

'That I shall aim these fated shafts
To vengeance long delay'd?
Have I not strength, my father, for the

Or can the will of Providence Be mutable like man? Shall I never be call'd to the task?

28

'Impatient boy!' quoth Moath, with a smile:

'Impatient Thalaba!' Oneiza cried, And she too smiled; but in her smile 400 A mild reproachful melancholy mix'd.

Then Moath pointed where a cloud Of locusts, from the desolated fields Of Syria wing'd their way.

'Lo! how created things Obey the written doom!'

30

Onward they came, a dark continuous cloud

Of congregated myriads numberless, The rushing of whose wings was as the sound

Of some broad river, headlong in its course 410

Plunged from a mountain summit; or the roar

Of a wild ocean in the autumnal storm, Shattering its billows on a shore of rocks, Onward they came, the winds impell'd them on.

Their work was done, their path of ruin past,

The youth and damsel bent Hodeirah's Their graves were ready in the wilderness.

'Behold the mighty army!' Moath cried,

'Blindly they move, impell'd By the blind Element.

And yonder birds our welcome visitants, See! where they soar above the embodied host, 421

Pursue their way, and hang upon the rear,

And thin the spreading flanks, Rejoicing o'er their banquet! Deemest thou [mosque

The scent of water on some Syrian
Placed with priest-mummery and fantastic rites [here
Which fool the multitude, hath led them

From far Khorassan? Allah who appoints

Yon swarms to be a punishment of man, These also hath he doom'd to meet their way: 430

Both passive instruments Of his all-acting will, Sole mover He, and only spring of all.'

32

While thus he spake, Onciza's eye looks up

Where one toward her flew, Satiate, for so it seem'd, with sport and food.

The Bird flew over her,
And as he pass'd above,
From his relaxing grasp a Locust fell;...
It fell upon the Maiden's robe, 440
And feebly there it stood, recovering slow.

33

The admiring girl survey'd
His out-spread sails of green;
His gauzy underwings, [furl'd,
One closely to the grass-green body
One ruffled in the fall, and half unclosed.
She view'd his jet-orb'd eyes,

His glossy gorget bright,
Green glittering in the sun;
His plumy pliant horns,
That, nearer as she gazed,
Bent tremblingly before her breath.
She mark'd his yellow-circled front
With lines mysterious vein'd;
And 'know'st thou what is here inscribed.

My father?' said the Maid.
'Look, Thalaba! perchance these lines
Are in the letters of the Ring,
Nature's own language written here.'

34

The youth bent down, and suddenly
He started, and his heart 46r
Sprung, and his check grew red,
For these mysterious lines were legible...
WHEN THE SUN SHALL BE DARKENED AT
NOON,

Son of Hodeirah, depart.

And Moath look'd, and read the lines aloud;

The Locust shook his wings and fled, And they were silent all.

35

Who then rejoiced but Thalaba?
Who then was troubled but the Arabian
Maid?
470

And Moath sad of heart,

Though with a grief supprest, beheld
the youth

Sharpen his arrows now,
And now new-plume their shafts,
Now, to beguile impatient hope,
Feel every sharpen'd point.

36

'Why is that anxious look,' Oneiza ask'd,
'Still upward east at noon?
Is Thalaba aweary of our tent?'
'I would be gone,' the youth replied, 480
'That I might do my task,
And full of glory to the tent return,
Whence I should part no more.'

But on the noontide sun. As anxious and as oft, Oneiza's eye Was upward glanced in fear. And now, as Thalaba replied, her cheek Lost its fresh and lively hue: For in the Sun's bright edge She saw, or thought she saw, a little speck. 400

The sage Astronomer Who, with the love of science full. Trembled that day at every passing cloud, . . small.

He had not seen it, 'twas a speck so

38

Alas! Oneiza sees the spot increase! And lo! the ready youth Over his shoulder the full quiver slings, And grasps the slacken'd bow. It spreads, and spreads, and now Hath shadow'd half the sun, 500 Whose crescent-pointed horns Now momently decrease.

39

The day grows dark, the birds retire to

Forth from her shadowy haunt Flies the large-headed screamer of the night.

Far off the affrighted African, Deeming his God deceased, Falls on his knees in prayer, And trembles as he sees The fierce hyena's eyes 510 Glare in the darkness of that dreadful noon.

40

Then Thalaba exclaim'd, 'Farewell, My father! my Oneiza!' the Old Man Felt his throat swell with grief. 'Where wilt thou go, my child?' he cried.

'Wilt thou not wait a sign

To point thy destined way?' 'God will conduct me!' said the faithful youth.

He said, and from the tent, In the depth of the darkness departed. They heard his parting steps, The quiver rattling as he pass'd away.

THE FOURTH BOOK

-Fas est quoque brutae Telluri, docilem monitis coelestibus esse. Mambruni Constantinus.

WHOSE is you dawning form. That in the darkness meets The delegated youth?

Dim as the shadow of a fire at noon. Or pale reflection on the evening brook Of glow-worm on the bank, Kindled to guide her winged paramour.

A moment, and the brightening image shaped [she cried, His Mother's form and features. 'Go.' 'To Babylon, and from the Angels learn What talisman thy task requires.' 11

The Spirit hung toward him when she ceased.

As though with actual lips she would have given

A mother's kiss. His arms outstretch'd, His body bending on,

His mouth unclosed and trembling into speech. [wind

He prest to meet the blessing, . . but the Play'd on his cheek: he look'd, and he beheld The cried.

The darkness close. 'Again! again!' 'Let me again behold thee!' from the darkness

His Mother's voice went forth: 'Thou shalt behold me in the hour of

death.'

Day dawns, the twilight gleam dilates, The Sun comes forth, and like a god Rides through rejoicing heaven. Old Moath and his daughter, from their tent.

Beheld the adventurous youth,
Dark-moving o'er the sands,
A lessening image, trembling through
their tears.

Visions of high emprize 30
Beguiled his lonely road;
And if sometimes to Moath's tent
The involuntary mind recurr'd,
Fancy, impatient of all painful thoughts,
Pictured the bliss should welcome his
return.

In dreams like these he went,
And still of every dream
Oneiza form'd a part,
And hope and memory made a mingled
joy.

5

In the eve he arrived at a Well; 40
An Acacia bent over its side,
Under whose long light-hanging boughs
He chose his night's abode.
There, due ablutions made, and prayers
perform'd,

The youth his mantle spread, And silently produced His solitary meal.

The silence and the solitude recall'd Dear recollections; and with folded arms.

Thinking of other days, he sate, till thought 50

Had left him, and the Acacia's moving shade

Upon the sunny sand,
Had caught his idle eye;
And his awaken'd ear
Heard the grey Lizard's chirp,
The only sound of life.

6

As thus in vacant quietness he sate,
A Traveller on a Camel reached the Well,
And courteous greeting gave.
The mutual salutation past,

60
He by the cictory too his garment spread

The mutual salutation past, 60
He by the cistern too his garment spread
And friendly converse cheer'd the social
meal.

7

The Stranger was an ancient man,
Yet one whose green old age
Bore the fair characters of temperate
youth;

So much of manhood's strength his limbs retain'd, [bore. It seem'd he needed not the staff he His beard was long, and grey, and crisp; Lively his eyes and quick,

And reaching over them 7°
The large broad eye-brow curl'd.
His speech was copious, and his winning

words [tive youth Enrich'd with knowledge, that the atten-Sate listening with a thirsty joy.

2

So in the course of talk,
The adventurer youth enquired
Whither his course was bent?
The Old Man answered, 'To Bagdad I
go.'

At that so welcome sound, a flash of joy
Kindled the eye of Thalaba; 80
'And I too,' he replied,

'Am journeying thitherward;
Let me become companion of thy way!'
Courteous the Old Man smiled,
And willing in assent.

9

OLD MAN

Son, thou art young for travel.

THALABA Until now

I never pass'd the desert boundary.

OLD MAN

It is a noble city that we seek. Thou wilt behold magnificent palaces, And lofty minarets, and high-domed Mosques,

And rich Bazars, whither from all the world [ket there Industrious merchants meet, and mar-The World's collected wealth.

THALABA

Stands not Bagdad Near to the site of ancient Babylon And Nimrod's impious temple?

OLD MAN

From the walls 'Tis but a long day's distance.

> THALABA And the ruins?

> > OLD MAN

A mighty mass remains; enough to tell us How great our fathers were, how little

Men are not what they were; their crimes and follies

Have dwarf'd them down from the old hero race

To such poor things as we!

THALABA At Babylon

I have heard the Angels expiate their guilt,

Haruth and Maruth.

OLD MAN

'Tis a history

Handed from ages down; a nurse's tale . .

Which children open-eyed and mouth'd devour: And thus as garrulous ignorance

We learn it and believe. . . But all things [and grass The power of Time and Change; thistles

[relates.

Usurp the desolate palace, and the weeds [Truth.

Of falsehood root in the aged pile of How have you heard the tale?

THALABA

Thus . . on a time

The Angels at the wickedness of man Express'd indignant wonder; that in vain

Tokens and signs were given, and Prophets sent. . . Strange obstinacy this! a stubbornness Of sin, they said, that should for ever

Theard The gates of mercy on them. Allah Their unforgiving pride, and bade that

Of these untempted Spirits should descend.

Judges on Earth. Haruth and Maruth went. Theard

The chosen Sentencers; they fairly The appeals of men to their tribunal brought.

And rightfully decided. At the length A Woman came before them; beautiful Zohara was, as yonder Evening Star, 121 In the mild lustre of whose lovely light Even now her beauty shines. They gazed on her

With fleshly eyes, they tempted her to The wily woman listen'd, and required A previous price, the knowledge of the Iname.

Of God. She learnt the wonder-working And gave it utterance, and its virtue bore her

Up to the glorious Presence, and she told Before the aweful Judgement-Seat her tale. 140

OLD MAN

I know the rest. The accused Spirits were call'd: Unable of defence, and penitent,

They own'd their crime, and heard the doom deserved.

Then they besought the Lord, that not for ever

His wrath might be upon them; and implored

That penal ages might at length restore them [Babylon,

Clean from offence; since then by
In the cavern of their punishment, they
dwell.

Runs the conclusion so?

THALABA

So I am taught.

OLD MAN

The common tale! And likely thou hast heard

How that the bold and bad, with impious rites

Intrude upon their penitence, and force, Albeit from loathing and reluctant lips, The sorcery-secret?

THALABA

Is it not the truth?

OLD MAN

Son, thou hast seen the Traveller in the sands

Move through the dizzy light of hot noon-day,

Huge as the giant race of clder times;
And his Camel, than the monstrous
Elephant, 160

Seem of a vaster bulk.

THALABA

A frequent sight.

OLD MAN

And hast thou never, in the twilight, fancied

Familiar object into some strange shape
And form uncouth?

THALABA

Ay! many a time.

OLD MAN Even so

Things view'd at distance through the

mist of fear,
By their distortion terrify and shock
The abused sight.

THALABA

But of these Angels' fate Thus in the uncreated book is written.

OLD MAR

Wisely from legendary fables, Heaven Inculcates wisdom.

THALABA

How then is the truth?

Is not the dungeon of their punishment
By ruin'd Babylon?

OLD MAN

By Babylon

Haruth and Maruth may be found.

THALABA

And there 180

Magicians learn their impious sorcery?

OLD MAN

Son, what thou say'st is true, and it is false.

But night approaches fast; I have travell'd far.

And my old lids are heavy; . . on our way fus now

We shall have hours for converse; . . let
Turn to our due repose. Son, peace
be with thee!

10

So in his loosen'd cloak

The Old Man wrapt himself,

And laid his limbs at length;

And Thalaba in silence laid him down.

Awhile he lay, and watch'd the lovely

Moon,

191

O'er whose broad orb the boughs A mazy fretting framed,

Or with a pale transparent green Lighting the restless leaves,

The thin Acacia leaves that play'd above.

The murmuring wind, the moving leaves,

Soothed him at length to sleep,
With mingled lullabies of sight and
sound.

1

Not so the dark Magician by his side, 200 Lobaba, who from the Domdaniel caves Had sought the dreaded youth. Silent he lay, and simulating sleep. Till by the long and regular breath he

The youth beside him slept.

Carefully then he rose,

And bending over him, survey'd him

near;

And secretly he cursed
The dead Abdaldar's ring,
Arm'd by whose amulet
He slept from danger safe.

12

Wrapt in his mantle Thalaba reposed, His loose right arm pillowing his easy head.

The Moon was on the Ring,
Whose crystal gem return'd
A quiet, moveless light.

Vainly the Wizard vile put forth his hand,

And strove to reach the gem; Charms, strong as hell could make them, kept it safe.

He call'd his servant-fiends, 220 He bade the Genii rob the sleeping youth. By the virtue of the Ring, By Mahommed's holier power,

By the holiest name of God, Had Thalaba disarm'd the evil race.

13

Baffled and weary, and convinced at length, [him, Anger, and fear, and rancour gnawing The accursed Sorcerer ceased his vain attempts,

Content perforce to wait
Temptation's likelier aid. 230
Restless he lay, and brooding many a
wile,

And tortured with impatient hope,
And envying with the bitterness of hate
The innocent youth, who slept so
sweetly by.

14

The ray of morning on his eye-lids fell,
And Thalaba awoke,
And folded his mantle around him,

And girded his loins for the day;
Then the due rites of holiness observed.
His comrade too arose, 240

And with the outward forms
Of righteousness and prayer insulted
God.

They fill'd their water skin, they gave The Camel his full draught.

Then on the road, while yet the morn was young.

And the air was fresh with dew,
Forward the travellers went,
With various talk beguiling the long way.
But soon the youth, whose busy mind
Dwelt on Lobaba's wonder-stirring
words.

Renew'd the unfinish'd converse of the night,

15

THALABA

Thou said'st that it is true, and yet is false,

That men accurst attain at Babylon Forbidden knowledge from the Angel pair:..

How mean you?

LOBABA

All things have a double power,
Alike for good and evil. The same fire
That on the comfortable hearth at eve
Warm'd the good man, flames o'er the
house at night;

Should we for this forego 260 The needful element?

Because the scorching summer Sun Darts fever, would'st thou quench the orb of day? [form'd Or deemest thou that Heaven in anger Iron to till the field, because when man Had tipt his arrows for the chase, he

rush'd

A murderer to the war ?

THALABA What follows hence?

LOBABA

That nothing in itself is good or evil, But only in its use. Think you the man Praiseworthy, who by painful study

learns

The knowledge of all simples, and their power,

Healing or harmful?

THALABA

All men hold in honour The skilful Leech. From land to land he goes Safe in his privilege; the sword of war

Spares him; Kings welcome him with costly gifts; [pain

And he who late had from the couch of Lifted a languid look to him for aid, Beholds him with glad eyes, and blesses him 280

In his first thankful prayer.

LOBABA

Yet some there are

Who to the purposes of wickedness Apply this knowledge, and from herbs distil

Poison, to mix it in the trusted draught.

THALABA

Allah shall cast them in the eternal fire Whose fuel is the cursed! there shall thev

Endure the ever-burning agony,

Consuming still in flames, and still renew'd.

LOBARA

But is their knowledge therefore in itself Unlawful? 200

THALABA

That were foolishness to think.

LOBABA

O what a glorious animal were Man. Knew he but his own powers, and, knowing, gave them

Room for their growth and spread! The Horse obeys

His guiding will: the patient Camel bears him [wafts Over these wastes of sand: the Pigeon His bidding through the sky; . . and with these triumphs

He rests contented ! . . with these ministers. . .

When he might awe the Elements, and make

Myriads of Spirits serve him! 300

THALABA

But as how?

By a league with Hell, a covenant that binds

The soul to utter death!

LOBABA

Was Solomon

Accurst of God? Yet to his talismans Obedient, o'er his throne the birds of Heaven,

Their waving wings his sun-shield, fann'd around him I to place.

The motionless air of noon; from place As his will rein'd the viewless Element,

He rode the Wind: the Genii rear'd his temple.

And ceaselessly in fear while his dread [their toil. eve

O'erlook'd them, day and night pursued So dreadful was his power.

THALABA

But 'twas from Heaven His wisdom came; God's special gift,... the guerdon Of early virtue.

LOBABA

Learn thou, O young man!
God hath appointed wisdom the reward
Of study! 'Tis a well of living waters,
Whose inexhaustible bounties all might
drink,
320

But few dig deep enough. Son! thou art silent, . .

Perhaps I say too much, . . perhaps offend thee.

THALABA

Nay, I am young, and willingly, as becomes me,

Hear the wise words of age.

LOBABA

Is it a crime

To mount the Horse, because forsooth thy feet [sin, Can serve thee for the journey?.. Is it Because the Hern soars upward in the sky [Falcon Above the arrow's flight, to train the Whose beak shall pierce him there? The powers which Allah 330 Granted to man, were granted for his use: [weakness]

All knowledge that belits not human Is placed beyond its reach... They who repair

To Babylon, and from the Angels learn Mysterious wisdom, sin not in the deed.

THALABA

Know you these secrets?

LOBABA

I? alas! my Son,

My age just knows enough to understand How little all its knowledge! Later years Sacred to study, teach me to regret 340 Youth's unforeseeing indolence, and hours [I know That cannot be recall'd! Something

The properties of herbs, and have sometimes [relief

Brought to the afflicted comfort and By the secrets of my art; under His blessing [Gems

Without whom all had fail'd! Also of I have some knowledge, and the characters

That tell beneath what aspect they were

THALABA

Belike you can interpret then the graving Around this Ring! 350

LOBABA

My sight is feeble, Son, And I must view it closer; let me try!

16

The unsuspecting Youth
Held forth his finger to draw off the spell.
Even whilst he held it forth,
There settled there a Wasp,

And just above the Gem infix'd its dart; All purple-swoln the hot and painful flesh Rose round the tighten'd Ring.

The baffled Sorcerer knew the hand of Heaven, 360

And inwardly blasphemed.

17

Ere long Lobaba's heart,
Fruitful in wiles, devised new stratagem.
A mist arose at noon,

Like the loose hanging skirts
Of some low cloud that, by the breeze
impell'd,

Sweeps o'er the mountain side. With joy the thoughtless youth That grateful shadowing hail'd;

For grateful was the shade, 370 While through the silver-lighted haze, Guiding their way, appear'd the beam-less Sun.

But soon that beacon fail'd: A heavier mass of cloud. Impenetrably deep. Hung o'er the wilderness. 'Knowest thou the track?' auoth Thalaba. ' Or should we pause, and wait the wind To scatter this bewildering fog?' The Sorcerer answer'd him. 'Now let us hold right on. . . for if we feourse.' The Sun to-morrow will direct our So saving, he toward the desert depths Misleads the youth deceived.

18 Earlier the night came on,

Nor moon, nor stars, were visible in

heaven: This eves. And when at morn the youth unclosed He knew not where to turn his face in prayer. 'What shall we do?' Lobaba cried, 'The lights of heaven have ceased To guide us on our way. 391 Should we remain and wait More favourable skies. Soon would our food and water fail us here:

And if we venture on, There are the dangers of the wilderness!'

19

'Sure it were best proceed!' The chosen youth replies: 'So haply we may reach some tent, or grove

Of dates, or station'd tribe. 400 But idly to remain, Were yielding effortless, and waiting death.'

The wily sorcerer willingly assents, And farther in the sands. Elate of heart, he leads the credulous They look'd around, no wells were near, youth.

20

Still o'er the wilderness Settled the moveless mist. The timid Antelope, that heard their steps, Idim light: Stood doubtful where to turn in that The Ostrich, blindly hastening, met them full. 410

At night, again in hope, Young Thalaba lay down; The morning came, and not one guiding Through the thick mist was visible. The same deep moveless mist that mantled all.

21

Oh for the Vulture's scream. Who haunts for prey the abode of humankind! Oh for the Plover's pleasant cry

To tell of water near! Oh for the Camel-driver's song 420

For now the water-skin grows light, Though of the draught, more eagerly desired. [thirst.

Imperious prudence took with sparing Oft from the third night's broken sleep, As in his dreams he heard

The sound of rushing winds. Started the anxious youth, and look'd abroad. fdured.

In vain! for still the deadly calm en-Another day pass'd on;

The water-skin was drain'd; 430 But then one hope arrived. For there was motion in the air! The sound of the wind arose anon.

That scatter'd the thick mist, And lo! at length the lovely face of

Heaven!

Alas!..a wretched scene Was open'd on their view. No tent, no human aid!

Flat on the Camel lay the water-skin, 440 And their dumb servant difficultly now, Over hot sands and under the hot sun, Dragg'd on with patient pain.

23

But oh the joy! the blessed sight!

When in that burning waste the

Travellers [besprent,
Saw a green meadow, fair with flowers
Azure and yellow, like the beautiful
fields [grass]

Of England, when amid the growing
The blue-bell bends, the golden king-cup
shines, [air,
And the sweet cowslip scents the genial
In the merry month of May! 451

Oh joy! the Travellers
Gaze on each other with hope-brighten'd
eyes, [flows

For sure through that green meadow The living stream! And lo! their famish'd beast.

Sees the restoring sight!

Hope gives his feeble limbs a sudden strength,

He hurries on ! . . 24

The herbs so fair to eye

Were Senna, and the Gentian's blossom
blue, 460

And kindred plants, that with unwater'd
root [leaves

Fed in the burning sand, whose bitter
Even frantic Famine loathed.

25

In uncommunicating misery
Silent they stood. At length Lobaba
said,

'Son, we must slay the Camel, or we die For lack of water! thy young hand is firm, . .

Draw forth the knife and pierce him!'
Wretch accurst!

Who that beheld thy venerable face, Thy features stiff with suffering, the dry lips, 470

The feverish eyes, could deem that all within

Was magic case, and fearlessness secure, And wiles of hellish import? The young man

Paused with reluctant pity: but he saw His comrade's red and painful countenance.

And his own burning breath came short and quick,

And at his feet the gasping beast Lies, over-worn with want.

26

Then from his girdle Thalaba took the knife

With stern compassion, and from side to side 480

Across the Camel's throat,
Drew deep the crooked blade.

Servant of man, that merciful deed For ever ends thy suffering; but what doom [death

Waits thy deliverer? ¹ Little will thy Avail us! 'thought the youth, As in the water-skin he pour'd The Camel's hoarded draught;

It gave a scant supply, 489
The poor allowance of one prudent day.

97

Son of Hodeirah, though thy steady soul Despair'd not, firm in faith,

Yet not the less did suffering nature feel Its pangs and trials. Long their craving thirst

Struggled with fear, by fear itself inflamed;

But drop by drop, that poor,
That last supply is drain'd.
Still the same burning sun! no cloud in
heaven!

The hot air quivers, and the sultry mist Floats o'er the desert with a show 500 Of distant waters, mocking their distress.

The youth's parch'd lips were black, His tongue was dry and rough, His eye-balls red with heat. Lobaba gazed on him with looks That seem'd to speak of pity, and he said.

'Let me behold thy Ring; It may have virtue that can save us yet!' With that he took his hand And view'd the writing close, 510 Then cried with sudden joy. 'It is a stone that whose bears. The Genii must obey! Now raise thy voice, my Son, And bid them in His name that here is written

Preserve us in our need.'

' Nay!' answer'd Thalaba, 'Shall I distrust the providence of God? Is it not He must save? If Allah wills it not. 520 Vain were the Genii's aid.'

30

Whilst he spake, Lobaba's eye, Upon the distance fix'd, Attended not his speech. Its fearful meaning drew The looks of Thalaba: Columns of sand came moving on, Red in the burning ray, Like obelisks of fire, They rush'd before the driving wind. 530 Vain were all thoughts of flight! They had not hoped escape, Could they have back'd the Dromedary then.

Who in his rapid race Gives to the tranquil air a drowning 'Bow of my Father, do thy duty now!'

31

High . . high in heaven upcurl'd The dreadful sand-spouts moved: Swift as the whirlwind that impell'd their way.

They came toward the travellers! The old Magician shrick'd. And lo! the foremost bursts. Before the whirlwind's force. Scattering afar a burning shower of sand.

' Now by the virtue of the Ring, · Save us!' Lobaba cried,

'While yet thou hast the power. Save us! O save us! now!' The youth made no reply. Gazing in aweful wonder on the scene.

'Why dost thou wait?' the Old Man exclaim'd. 'If Allah and the Prophet will not

save. Call on the powers that will!'

33

'Ha! do I know thee, Infidel accurst?' Exclaim'd the awaken'd youth.

'And thou hast led me hither, Child of Sin!

> That fear might make me sell My soul to endless death!'

> > 34

'Fool that thou art!' Lobaba cried, 'Call upon Him whose name Thy charmed signet bears, Ordie the death thy foolishness deserves!'

'Servant of Hell! die thou!' quoth Thalaba.

And leaning on his bow He fitted the loose string [force. And laid the arrow in its resting-place. He drew the arrow to its point,
True to his eye it fled,
And full upon the breast
It smote the Sorcerer.
Astonish'd Thalaba beheld
The blunted point recoil.

36

A proud and bitter smile
Wrinkled Lobaba's check.
'Try once again thine earthly arms!'
he cried.

'Rash Boy! the Power I serve
Abandons not his votaries.

It is for Allah's wretched slaves, like

To serve a master, who in the hour of need

Forsakes them to their fate! 580 I leave thee!'...and he shook his staff, and call'd

The Chariot of his charms.

37

Swift as the viewless wind,
Self-moved, the Chariot came;
The Sorcerer mounts the seat.
'Yet once more weigh thy danger!' he
resumed,

'Ascend the car with me,
And with the speed of thought
We pass the desert bounds.'
The indignant youth vouchsafed not to
reply,
590

And lo! the magic car begins its course!

38

Hark! hark! . . he shrieks . . Lobaba shrieks!

What, wretch, and hast thou raised
The rushing terrors of the Wilderness
To fall on thine own head?
Death! death! inevitable death!
Driven by the breath of God,
A column of the Desert met his way.

THE FIFTH BOOK

Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle; thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me.— Psalm xviii. 39.

1

When Thalaba from adoration rose,
The air was cool, the sky
With welcome clouds o'ercast,
Which soon came down in rain.
He lifted up his fever'd face to heaven,
And bared his head and stretch'd his

hands
To that delightful shower,
And felt the coolness permeate every
limb.

Freshening his powers of life.

2

A loud quick panting! Thalaba looks up, 10

He starts, and his instinctive hand Grasps the knife hilt; for close beside

A Tiger passes him.

An indolent and languid eye
The passing Tiger turn'd;
His head was hanging down,

His dry tongue lolling low,
And the short panting of his breath
Came through his hot parch'd nostrils
painfully.

The young Arabian knew
The purport of his hurried pace,
And following him in hope,
Saw joyful from afar
The Tiger stoop and drink.

3

A desert Pelican had built her nest In that deep solitude, And now, return'd from distant flight,

And now, return'd from distant flight Fraught with the river-stream,

Her load of water had disburthen'd there. Her young in the refreshing bath 30 Dipt down their callow heads, Fill'd the swoln membrane from their Roams o'er the city with insatiate eyes; plumeless throat Pendant, and bills yet soft; And buoyant with arch'd breast. Plied in unpractised stroke The oars of their broad feet. They, as the spotted prowler of the wild Laps the cool wave, around their mother crowd. [wings. And nestle underneath her outspread The spotted prowler of the wild Lapt the cool wave, and satiate, from the nest. Guiltless of blood, withdrew.

The mother-bird had moved not, But cowering o'er her nestlings, Sate confident and fearless, And watch'd the wonted guest. But when the human visitant approach'd. The alarmed Pelican Retiring from that hostile shape Gathers her young, and menaces with wings. And forward thrusts her threatening

neck. Its feathers ruffling in her wrath, Bold with maternal fear. Thalaba drank, and in the water-skin Hoarded the precious element. Not all he took, but in the large nest left Store that sufficed for life; And journeying onward, blest the Carrier Bird.

And blest, in thankfulness, Their common Father, provident for all.

With strength renew'd, and confident in faith. 61

The son of Hodeirah proceeds; Till after the long toil of many a day, At length Bagdad appear'd, The City of his search. He hastening to the gate,

Its thousand dwellings, o'er whose level roofs [mosques, Fair cupolas appear'd, and high-domed And pointed minarets, and cypress groves Every where scatter'd in unwithering green.

Thou too art fallen, Bagdad! City of Peace

Thou too hast had thy day; And loathsome Ignorance and brute Servitude,

Pollute thy dwellings now, Erst for the Mighty and the Wise renown'd.

O yet illustrious for remember'd fame,-Thy founder the Victorious,—and the pomp Of Haroun, for whose name by blood

Yahia's, and the blameless Barmecides', Genius hath wrought salvation,-and the years When Science with the good Al-Maimon

dwelt: Mosques So one day may the Crescent from thy Be pluck'd by Wisdom, when the enlighten'd arm

Of Europe conquers to redeem the East!

Then Pomp and Pleasure dwelt within her walls: [West

The Merchants of the East and of the Met in her arch'd Bazars:

All day the active poor Shower'd a cool comfort o'er her thronging streets; 00 Labour was busy in her looms;

Through all her open gates Long troops of laden Camels lined the roads. stream

And Tigris bore upon his tameless Armenian harvests to her multitudes. Q

But not in sumptuous Caravansery
The adventurer idles there,
Nor satiates wonder with her pomp and
wealth:

A long day's distance from the walls
Stands ruined Babylou; 100
The time of action is at hand;
The hope that for so many a year
Hath been his daily thought, his nightly
dream,

Stings to more restlessness.

He loaths all lingering that delays the hour [return'd, When, full of glory, from his quest He on the pillar of the Tent beloved Shall hang Hodeirah's sword.

9

The many-coloured domes
Yet wore one dusky hue;
The Cranes upon the Mosque
Kept their night-clatter still;
When through the gate the early Traveller pass'd. [plain
And when at evening o'er the swampy
The Bittern's boom came far,
Distinct in darkness seen
Above the low horizon's lingering light,
Rose the near ruins of old Babylon.

16

Once from her lofty walls the Charioteer
Look'd down on swarming myriads;
once she flung
Her arches o'er Euphrates' conquer'd
tide, [she pour'd
And through her brazen portals when
Her armies forth, the distant nations
look'd [fear,
As men who watch the thunder-cloud in
Lest it should burst above them. She
was fallen,
The Queen of cities, Babylon, was fallen!
Low lay her bulwarks; the black

Scorpion bask'd

In the palace courts; within the sanctuary

The She-Wolf hid her whelps.

Is yonder huge and shapeless heap,
what once 130

Hath been the aërial Gardens, height on
height [with wood,

Rising like Media's mountains crown'd Work of imperial dotage? Where the fanc [now,

Of Belus? Where the Golden Image Which at the sound of dulcimer and lute, Cornet and sacbut, harp and psaltery, The Assyrian slaves adored?

A labyrinth of ruins, Babylon Spreads o'er the blasted plain: The wandering Arab never sets his tent Within her walls; the Shepherd eyes

Her evil towers, and devious drives his flock. [tide,

Alone unchanged, a free and bridgeless Euphrates rolls along, Eternal Nature's work.

11

Through the broken portal, Over weedy fragments, Thalaba went his way. Cautious he trod, and felt

The dangerous ground before him with his bow. 150

The Jackal started at his steps;
The Stork, alarm'd at sound of man,
From her broad nest upon the old pillar
top.

Affrighted fled on flapping wings;
The Adder, in her haunts disturb'd,
Lanced at the intruding staff her arrowy
tongue.

19

Twilight and moonshine dimly mingling gave

An aweful light obscure,

An aweful light obscure, Evening not wholly closed,

The Moon still pale and faint: 160
An aweful light obscure,

Broken by many a mass of blackest shade; Long column stretching dark through weeds and moss,

Broad length of lofty wall,
Whose windows lay in light,
And of their former shape, low arch'd
or square.

Rude outline on the earth Figured, with long grass fringed.

13

Reclined against a column's brokenshaft, Unknowing whitherward to bend his way,

He stood, and gazed around.
The Ruins closed him in;

It seem'd as if no foot of man For ages had intruded there.

14

Soon at approaching step Startling, he turn'd and saw A Warrior in the moon-beam drawing near.

> Forward the Stranger came, And with a curious eye Perused the Arab youth.

> > 15

'And who art thou,' the Stranger cried,
'That at an hour like this
Wanderest in Babylon?

A way-bewilder'd traveller, seekest thou The ruinous shelter here?

> Or comest thou to hide The plunder of the night?

Or hast thou spells to make Those ruins, yawning from their rooted base.

Disclose their secret wealth?' 100

16

The youth replied, 'Nor wandering traveller,

Nor robber of the night,

Nor skill'd in spells am I.
I seek the Angels here,
Haruth and Maruth. Stranger, in thy

turn,

Why wanderest thou in Babylon, And who art thou, the questioner?'

ľ

The man was fearless, and the temper'd pride

Which toned the voice of Thalaba Displeased not him, himself of haughty heart. 200

Heedless he answered, 'Knowest thou Their cave of punishment?'

18

THALABA

Vainly I seek it.

STRANGER

Art thou firm of foot
To tread the ways of danger?

THALABA

Point the path!

STRANGER

Young Arab! if thou hast a heart can beat [not

Evenly in danger; if thy bowels yearn With human fears, at scenes where undisgraced

The soldier tried in battle might look

And tremble, follow me! . . for I am bound

Into that cave of horrors.

19

Thalaba

Gazed on his comrade: he was young, of port

Stately and strong; belike his face had pleased [in it

A woman's eye; but the youth read Unrestrain'd passions, the obdurate soul Bold in all evil daring; and it taught, By Nature's irresistible instinct, doubt Well-timed and wary. Of himself assured.

Fearless of man, and firm in faith, 220
'Lead on!' cried Thalaba.
Mohareb led the way;
And through the ruin'd streets,
And through the farther gate,
They pass'd in silence on.

20

What sound is borne on the wind?

Is it the storm that shakes
The thousand oaks of the forest?
But Thalaba's long locks
Flow down his shoulders moveless, and
the wind 230
In his loose mantle raises not a fold.
Is it the river's roar
Dash'd down some rocky descent?
Along the level plain
Euphrates glides unheard.
What sound disturbs the night,
Loud as the summer forest in the storm,
As the river that roars among rocks?

21

And what the heavy cloud
That hangs upon the vale, 240
Thick as the mist o'er a well-water'd
plain
Settling at evening, when the cooler air
Lets its day-vapours fall;
Black as the sulphur-cloud,
That through Vesuvius, or from Hecla's
mouth, [fires?
Rolls up, ascending from the infernal

22

From Ait's bitumen-lake
That heavy cloud ascends;
That everlasting roar
From where its gushing springs 250
Boil their black billows up.
Silent the Arabian youth,
Along the verge of that wide lake,

Follow'd Mohareb's way, Toward a ridge of rocks that bank'd its side.

There from a cave, with torrent force, And everlasting roar,

The black bitumen roll'd.

The moonlight lay upon the rocks;
Their crags were visible, 260

The shade of jutting cliffs,

And where broad lichens whiten'd some
smooth spot.

And where the ivy hung Its flowing tresses down.

A little way within the cave
The moonlight fell, glossing the sable
tide

That gush'd tumultuous out.

A little way it entered, then the rock
Arching its entrance, and the winding
way.

Darken'd the unseen depths. 270

23

No eye of mortal man,
If unenabled by enchanted spell,
Had pierced those fearful depths;
For mingling with the roar
Of the portentous torrent, oft were heard
Shrieks, and wild yells that scared
The brooding Eagle from her midnight
nest.

The affrighted countrymen
Call it the mouth of Hell;
And ever when their way leads near
They hurry with averted eyes, 281
And dropping their beads fast,
Pronounce the Holy Name.

24

There pausing at the cavern-mouth,
Mohareb turn'd to Thalaba:
'Now darest thou enter in?'
'Behold!' the youth replied,
And leading in his turn the dangerous

way, Set foot within the cave.

'Stay, Madman!' cried his comrade:
 'Wouldst thou rush 290
Headlong to certain death?

Headlong to certain death?
Where are thine arms to meet

The Keeper of the Passage?' A loud shrick, [cave,

That shook along the windings of the Scatter'd the youth's reply.

26

Mohareb, when the long re-echoing ceased.

Exclaim'd, 'Fate favour'd thee, Young Arab! when she wrote upon thy brow

The meeting of to-night;
Else surely had thy name 300
This hour been blotted from the Book
of Life!

27

So saying, from beneath
His cloak a bag he drew:
'Young Arab! thou art brave,' he cried,
'But thus to rush on danger unprepared,
As lions spring upon the hunter's spear,
Is blind, brute courage. Zohak keeps
the cave:

Against that Giant of primeval days

No force can win the passage.' Thus he
said.

And from his wallet drew a human hand,
Shrivell'd and dry and black; 311
And fitting as he spake
A taper in its hold,

Pursued: 'A murderer on the stake had died! [lopt I drove the Vulture from his limbs, and

I drove the Vulture from his limbs, and The hand that did the murder, and drew up

The tendon strings to close its grasp,
And in the sun and wind
Parch'd it, nine weeks exposed.
The Taper, . . but not here the place to
impart, 320

Nor hast thou undergone the rites,
That fit thee to partake the mystery.
Look! it burns clear, but with the air
around,

Its dead ingredients mingle deathiness. This when the Keeper of the Cave shall feel.

Maugre the doom of Heaven,
The salutary spell
Shall lull his penal agony to sleep,
And leave the passage free.'

28

Thalaba answer'd not. 330

Nor was there time for answer now,

For lo! Mohareb leads,

And o'er the vaulted cave,

Trembles the accursed taper's feeble light.

There where the narrowing chasm Rose loftier in the hill, Stood Zohak, wretched man, condemn'd to keep

His Cave of punishment.
His was the frequent scream
Which when far off the prowling Jackal
heard, 340

He howl'd in terror back:
For from his shoulders grew
Two snakes of monster size,
Which ever at his head

Aim'd their rapacious teeth
To satiate raving hunger with his brain.
He, in the eternal conflict, oft would
seize [grasp

Their swelling necks, and in his giant Bruise them, and rend their flesh with bloody nails.

And howl for agony, 350
Feeling the pangs he gave, for of himself
Co-sentient and inseparable parts,

The snaky torturers grew.

29

To him approaching now, Mohareb held the wither'd arm, The taper of enchanted power.

The unhallow'd spell in hand unholy held.

Then minister'd to mercy; heavily
The wretch's eyelids closed;
And welcome and unfelt, 360
Like the release of death,
A sudden sleep surprised his vital powers.

30

Yet though along the cave relax'd Lay Zohak's giant limbs, [pass, The twin-born serpents kept the narrow Kindled their fiery eyes,

Darted their tongues of terror, and roll'd out

Their undulating length, [ship Like the long streamers of some gallant Buoy'd on the wavy air, 370 Still struggling to flow on, and still withheld.

The scent of living flesh Inflamed their appetite.

31

Prepared for all the perils of the cave, Mohareb came. He from his wallet drew Two human heads, yet warm.

O hard of heart! whom not the visible power

Of retributive Justice, and the doom Of Zohak in his sight,

Deterr'd from equal crime! 380
Two human heads, yet warm, he laid
Before the scaly guardians of the pass;
They to their wonted banquet of old
years [free.

Turn'd eager, and the narrow pass was

39

And now before their path
The opening cave dilates;
They reach a spacious vault,
Where the black river-fountains burst
their way.

Now as a whirlwind's force

Had center'd on the spring, 390
The gushing flood roll'd up;
And now the deaden'd roar
Echoed beneath, collapsing as it sunk
Within a dark abyss,
Adown whose fathomless gulphs the eye
was lost.

33

Blue flames that hover'd o'er the springs Flung through the cavern their uncertain light:

Now waving on the waves they lay,
And now their fiery curls
Flow'd in long tresses up,
400

And now contracting, glow'd with whiter heat!

Then up they shot again,
Darting pale flashes through the
tremulous air; [smoke,
The flames, the red and yellow sulphurAnd the black darkness of the yault,

Commingling indivisibly.

34

'Here,' quoth Mohareb, 'do the Angels dwell,

The Teachers of Enchantment.' Thalaba Then raised his voice, and cried,

'Haruth and Maruth, hear me! Not with rites 410

Accursed, to disturb your penitence, And learn forbidden lore.

Repentant Angels, seek I your abode; But sent by Allah and the Prophet here,

Obediently I come, Their chosen servant I.

Tell me the Talisman'-

35

'And dost thou think,'
Mohareb cried, as with a smile of scorn
He glanced upon his comrade, 'dost
thou think 420
To trick them of their secret? For the

dupes

Of human-kind keep this lip-righteousness!
'Twill serve thee in the Mosque

'Twill serve thee in the Mosque
And in the Market-place,
But Spirits view the heart.
Only by strong and torturing spells
enforced.

Those stubborn angels teach the charm By which we must descend.'

36

'Descend?' said Thalaba.

But then the wrinkling smile 430
Forsook Mohareb's cheek,

And darker feelings settled on his brow.

'Now by my soul,' quoth he, 'and I believe.

Idiot! that I have led Some camel-knee'd prayer-monger through the cave! What brings thee hither? Thou should'st have a hut By some Saint's grave beside the public There to less-knowing fools Retail thy Koran-scraps. And in thy turn die civet-like at last In the dung-perfume of thy sanctity!.. Ye whom I seek! that, led by me, Feet uninitiate tread Your threshold, this atones !-Fit sacrifice he falls! And forth he flash'd his scymetar, And raised the murderous blow.

37

There ceased his power; his lifted arm,
Suspended by the spell,
Hung impotent to strike.

'Poor hypocrite!' cried he,
'And this then is thy faith
In Allah and the Prophet! They had
fail'd
To save thee, but for Magic's stolen aid;
Yea, they had left thee yonder Serpent's
meal.

But that, in prudent cowardice, The chosen Servant of the Lord came in, Safe follower of my path!'

38

'Blasphemer! dost thou boast of guiding me?'

Quoth Thalaba, with virtuous pride inflamed, 460

'Blindly the wicked work
The righteous will of Heaven!
Sayest thou that diffident of God,
In Magic spells I trust?
Liar! let witness this!'
And he drew off Abdaldar's Ring,
And cast it in the gulph.
A skinny hand came up,
And caught it as it fell,
And peals of devilish laughter shook the
Cave. 470

30

Then joy suffused Mohareb's cheek,
And Thalaba beheld
The blue blade gleam, descending to
destroy.

40

The undefended youth
Sprung forward, and he seized
Mohareb in his grasp,
And grappled with him breast to breast.
Sinewy and large of limb Mohareb was,
Broad-shoulder'd, and his joints
Knit firm, and in the strife

Of danger practised well.

Time had not thus matured young

Thalaba:

But high-wrought feeling now,
The inspiration and the mood divine,
Infused a force portentous, like the
strength

Of madness through his frame.

Mohareb reels before him; he right on,
With knee, with breast, with arm,
Presses the staggering foe;

And now upon the brink 490 Of that tremendous spring, . . There with fresh impulse and a rush of force.

> He thrust him from his hold. The upwhirling flood received Mohareb, then, absorb'd, Engulph'd him in the abyss.

41

Thalaba's breath came fast,
And panting, he breath'd out
A broken prayer of thankfulness.
At length he spake and said, 500
'Haruth and Maruth! are ye here?
Or hath that evil guide misled my
search?

I, Thalaba, the Servant of the Lord, Invoke you. Hear me, Angels! so may Heaven

Accept and mitigate your penitence.

I go to root from earth the Sorcerer brood,

Tell me the needful Talisman!'

42

Thus as he spake, recumbent on the rock

Beyond the black abyss,
Their forms grew visible. 510
A settled sorrow sate upon their brows,...
Sorrow alone, for trace of guilt and shame

None now remain'd; and gradual as by prayer

The sin was purged away, Their robe of glory, purified of stain, Resumed the lustre of its native light.

43

In awe the youth received the answering voice,

'Son of Hodeirah! thou hast proved it here;

The Talisman is Faith.'

THE SIXTH BOOK

Then did I see a pleasant Paradise,
Full of sweet flowers and daintiest delights,
Such as on earth man could not more devise
With pleasures choice to feed his cheerful
sprights:

Not that which Merlin by his magic slights Made for the gentle squire to entertain His fair Belphoebe, could this garden stain.

SPENSER, Ruins of Time.

1

So from the inmost cave
Did Thalaba retrace

The windings of the rock.

Still on the ground the giant limbs

Of Zohak lay dispread;

The spell of sleep had ceased,
And his broad eyes were glaring on the
youth:

Yet raised he not his arm to bar the way, Fearful to rouse the snakes Now lingering o'er their meal. 10

2

Oh then, emerging from that dreadful cave.

How grateful did the gale of night Salute his freshen'd sense! How full of lightsome joy,

Thankful to Heaven, he hastens by the verge
Of that bitumen-lake,

Whose black and heavy fumes, Surge heaving after surge, [sea. Roll'd like the billowy and tumultuous

3

The song of many a bird at morn 20 Aroused him from his rest.

Lo! at his side a courser stood; More animate of eye,

Of form more faultless never had he seen, [strength,

More light of limbs and beautiful in Among the race whose blood, Pure and unmingled, from the royal That crost her in the path of Heaven. steeds

Of Solomon came down.

The chosen Arab's eye Glanced o'er his graceful shape, 30 His rich caparisons, His crimson trappings gav. But when he saw the mouth Uncurb'd, the unbridled neck, Then his heart leapt, and then his cheek was flush'd: Sent For sure he deem'd that Heaven had

guide. And lo! the eager Steed Throws his head and paws the ground, Impatient of delay! 40

A courser, whom no erring hand might

Then up leapt Thalaba, And away went the self-govern'd courser.

Over the plain Away went the steed: With the dew of the morning his fetlocks were wet. [of noon, The foam froth'd his limbs in the journey Nor stay'd he till over the westerly heaven The shadows of evening had spread. Then on a shelter'd bank

The appointed Youth reposed, And by him laid the docile courser down. Again in the grey of the morning

Thalaba bounded up; Over hill, over dale. Away goes the steed. Again at eve he stops. Again the Youth alights;

His load discharg'd, his errand done, The courser then bounded away.

Heavy and dark the eve; 60 The Moon was hid on high, A dim light tinged the mist

All living sounds had ceased, Only the flow of waters near was heard, A low and lulling melody.

Fasting, yet not of want Percipient, he on that mysterious steed Had reach'd his resting-place, For expectation kept his nature up. Now as the flow of waters near 71 Awoke a feverish thirst. Led by the sound he moved To seek the grateful wave.

A meteor in the hazy air Play'd before his path; Before him now it roll'd A globe of living fire:

And now contracted to a steady light, As when the solitary hermit prunes 80 His lamp's long undulating flame;

And now its wavy point Up-blazing rose, like a young cypress tree Sway'd by the heavy wind; Anon to Thalaba it moved,

And wrapt him in its pale innocuous fire; Now, in the darkness drown'd, Left him with eyes bedimm'd, And now, emerging, spread the scene to sight.

Led by the sound and meteor-flame, The Arabian youth advanced. Now to the nearest of the many rills He stoops; ascending steam Timely repels his hand, For from its source it sprung, a boiling tide.

A second course with better hap he tries. The wave intensely cold Tempts to a copious draught. There was a virtue in the wave:

His limbs, that stiff with toil

Dragg'd heavy, from the copious draught | Alternate light and blackness, like the received

Lightness and supple strength. O'erjoyed, and weening the benignant Power.

Who sent the reinless steed. Had blest these healing waters to his use. He laid him down to sleep. Lull'd by the soothing and incessant sound.

The flow of many waters, blending oft With shriller tones and deep low murmurings,

Which from the fountain caves rro In mingled melody Icame. Like facry music, heard at midnight.

The sounds which last he heard at night Awoke his recollection first at morn. A scene of wonders lay before his eyes. In mazy windings o'er the vale A thousand streamlets stray'd, And in their endless course Had intersected deep the stony soil, With labyrinthine channels islanding 120 A thousand rocks, which seem'd Amid the multitudinous waters there Like clouds that freekle o'er the summer sky,

The blue ethereal ocean circling each, And insulating all.

11

Those islets of the living rock Were of a thousand shapes, And Nature with her various tints Diversified anew their thousand forms: For some were green with moss, 130 Some ruddier tinged, or grey, or silverwhite.

And some with yellow lichens glow'd like gold, sun. Some sparkled sparry radiance to the Here gush'd the fountains up,

play farms. Of sunbeams on a warrior's burnish'd

Yonder the river roll'd, whose ample bed, Their sportive lingerings o'er,

Received and bore away the confluent rills.

12

This was a wild and wondrous scene. 140 Strange and beautiful, as where By Oton-tala, like a sea of stars, The hundred sources of Hoangho burst.

High mountains closed the vale. Bare rocky mountains, to all living things

Inhospitable; on whose sides no herb Rooted, no insect fed, no bird awoke Their echoes, save the Eagle, strong of wing.

> A lonely plunderer, that afar Sought in the vales his prey. 150

Thither toward those mountains Thalaba Following, as he believed, the path prescribed

By Destiny, advanced. Up a wide vale that led into their depths, A stony vale between receding heights Of stone, he wound his way.

A cheerless place! the solitary Bee, Whose buzzing was the only sound of

Flew there on restless wing, [fix. Seeking in vain one flower, whereon to

14

Still Thalaba holds on; The winding vale now narrows on his view.

And steeper of ascent, Rightward and leftward rise the rocks, And now they meet across the vale. Was it the toil of human hands Had hewn a passage in the rock,

Through whose rude portal-way
The light of heaven was seen?
Rude and low the portal-way; 170
Beyond, the same ascending straits
Went winding up the wilds.

10

Still a bare, silent, solitary glen,
A fearful silence, and a solitude
That made itself be felt;
And steeper now the ascent,
A rugged path, that tired
The straining muscles, toiling slowly up.
At length again a rock
Stretch'd o'er the narrow vale; 180
There also had a portal-way been hewn,
But gates of massy iron barr'd the pass,
Huge, solid, heavy-hinged.

16

There hung a horn beside the gate,
Ivory-tipt and brazen-mouth'd;
He took the ivory tip,
And through the brazen-mouth he
breath'd;
Like a long thunder-peal.

Like a long thunder-peal,
From rock to rock rebounding rung the
blast;

The gates of iron, by no human arm 190
Unfolded, turning on their hinges slow,
Disclosed the passage of the rock.
He enter'd, and the iron gates fell to,
And with a clap like thunder closed
him in.

17

It was a narrow winding way;
Dim lamps suspended from the vault,
Lent to the gloom an agitated light.
Winding it pierced the rock,
A long descending path
By gates of iron closed; 200
There also hung a horn beside
Of ivory tip and brazen mouth;
Again he took the ivory tip,
And gave the brazen mouth its voice
again.

Not now in thunder spake the horn, But breathed a sweet and thrilling melody:

The gates flew open, and a flood of light Rush'd on his dazzled eyes.

18

Was it to earthly Eden, lost so long,
The fated Youth had found his wondrous way?

210

But earthly Eden boasts
No terraced palaces,
No rich pavilions bright with woven gold,
Like these that in the vale
Rise amid odorous groves.
The astonish'd Thalaba,
Doubting as though an unsubstantial

dream
Beguiled him, closed his eyes,
And open'd them again;
And yet uncertified, 220

He prest them close, and as he look'd around

Question'd the strange reality again.

He did not dream; They still were there, The glittering tents, The odorous groves, The gorgeous palaces.

19

And lo! a man, reverend in comely age,
Advancing greets the youth.

'Favour'd of Fortune,' thus he said,
'go taste 230

The joys of Paradise!
The reinless steed that ranges o'er the
world.

Brings hither those alone for lofty deeds
Mark'd by their horoscope; permitted
thus

A foretaste of the full beatitude,
That in heroic acts they may go on
More ardent, eager to return and reap
Endless enjoyment here, their destined
meed.

Favour'd of Fortune thou, go taste The joys of Paradise!' 240

20

This said, he turn'd away, and left The Youth in wonder mute: For Thalaba stood mute. And passively received The mingled joy which flow'd on every sense.

Where'er his eye could reach, Fair structures, rainbow-hucd, arose; And rich pavilions through the opening woods

Gleam'd from their waving curtains sunny gold;

And winding through the verdant vale, Went streams of liquid light; And fluted cypresses rear'd up Their living obelisks:

And broad-leav'd plane-trees in long colonnades

O'er-arch'd delightful walks, Where round their trunks the thousand tendrill'd vine

Wound up and hung the boughs with greener wreaths,

And clusters not their own. [eyes Wearied with endless beauty, did his Return for rest? beside him teems the earth

With tulips, like the ruddy evening streak'd;

And here the lily hangs her head of snow; And here amid her sable cup Shines the red-eye spot, like one brightest star,

The solitary twinkler of the night; And here the rose expands Her paradise of leaves.

21

Then on his ear what sounds Of harmony arose! Far music and the distance-mellow'd

From bowers of merriment: The waterfall remote: The murmuring of the leafy groves; The single nightingale

Perch'd in the rosier by, so richly toned, That never from that most melodious

Singing a love-song to his brooding mate, Did Thracian shepherd by the grave Of Orpheus hear a sweeter melody.

Though there the Spirit of the Sepulchre All his own power infuse, to swell 281

The incense that he loves.

And oh! what odours the voluptuous vale

Scatters from jasmine bowers, From yon rose wilderness, From cluster'd henna and from orange groves.

That with such perfumes fill the breeze As Peris to their Sister bear, When from the summit of some lofty

She hangs encaged, the captive of the Dives. 200

They from their pinions shake The sweetness of celestial flowers,

And, as her enemies impure From that impervious poison far away Fly groaning with the torment, she the while

Inhales her fragrant food.

Such odours flow'd upon the world, When at Mohammed's nuptials, word Went forth in Heaven, to roll

The everlasting gates of Paradise 300 Back on their living hinges, that its gales

Might visit all below; the general bliss Thrill'd every bosom, and the family Of man, for once, partook one common jov.

song 270

Full of the bliss, yet still awake
To wonder, on went Thalaba;
On every side the song of mirth,
The music of festivity,
Invite the passing youth.
Wearied at length with hunger and with

heat, 310

He enters in a banquet room,
Where round a fountain brink,
On silken carpets sate the festive train.
Instant through all his frame
Delightful coolness spread;
The playing fount refresh'd
The agitated air;

The very light came cool'd through silvering panes [tinged;
Of pearly shell, like the pale moon-beam
Or where the wine-vase fill'd the
aperture. 320

Rosy as rising morn, or softer gleam Of saffron, like the sunny evening mist: Through every hue, and streak'd by all, The flowing fountain play'd.

Around the water-edge Vessels of winc, alternate placed, Ruby and amber, tinged its little waves.

From golden goblets there
The guests sate quaffing the delicious
juice

Of Shiraz' golden grape.

330

25

But Thalaba took not the draught;
For rightly he knew had the Prophet
forbidden

That beverage, the mother of sins.

Nor did the urgent guests

Proffer a second time the liquid fire,
When in the youth's strong eye they saw

No moveable resolve.

Yet not uncourteous, Thalaba
Drank the cool draught of innocence,
That fragrant from its dewy vase 340
Came purer than it left its native bed;

And he partook the odorous fruits,
For all rich fruits were there;
Water-melons rough of rind,
Whose pulp the thirsty lip
Dissolved into a draught;
Pistachios from the heavy-cluster'd trees
Of Malavert, or Haleb's fertile soil;
And Casbin's luscious grapes of amber
hue,
That many a week endure 350

That many a week endure
The summer sun intense,
Till by its powerful heat
All watery particles exhaled, alone
The strong essential sweetness ripens
there.

Here cased in ice the apricot,
A topaz, crystal-set:
Here, on a plate of snow,
The sunny orange rests;
And still the aloes and the sandal-wood,
From golden censers, o'er the banquet
room 360

Diffuse their dying sweets.

20

Anon a troop of females form'd the dance,
Their ankles bound with bracelet-bells,
That made the modulating harmony.
Transparent garments to the greedy eye
Exposed their harlot limbs,
Which moved, in every wanton gesture

skill'd. 27

With earnest eyes the banqueters
Fed on the sight impure;
And Thalaba, he gazed, 370
But in his heart he bore a talisman,
Whose blessed alchemy
To virtuous thoughts refined

The loose suggestions of the scene impure.

Oneiza's image swam before his sight,

His own Arabian Maid.

He rose, and from the banquet room he rush'd,

Tears coursed his burning cheek;

And nature for a moment woke the thought,

And murmur'd, that, from all domestic joys 380

Estranged, he wander'd o'er the world A lonely being, far from all he loved. Son of Hodeirah, not among thy crimes That momentary murmur shall be written!

28

From tents of revelry,
From festal bowers, to solitude he ran;
And now he came where all the rills
Of that well-water'd garden in one tide
Roll'd their collected waves.

A straight and stately bridge 390
Stretch'd its long arches o'er the ample stream. [shade
Strong in the evening and distinct its
Lay on the watery mirror, and his eye
Saw it united with its parent pile,
One huge fantastic fabric. Drawing near,
Loud from the chambers of the bridge below,

Sounds of carousal came and song, And unveil'd women bade the advancing youth

Come merry-make with them!
Unhearing, or unheeding, he 400
Pass'd o'er with hurried pace,
And sought the shade and silence of the
grove.

29

Deserts of Araby!
His soul return'd to you.
He cast himself upon the earth,
And closed his eyes and call'd
The voluntary vision up.
A cry, as of distress,
Aroused him; loud it came and near!
He started up, he strung his bow, 410

He pluck'd an arrow forth.

Again a shriek . . a woman's shriek!

And lo! she rushes through the trees,

Her veil is rent, her garments torn!
The ravisher follows close.
'Prophet, save me! save me, God!

Help! help me, man!' to Thalaba she cried:

cried;

Thalaba drew the bow.
The unerring arrow did its work of death.
Then turning to the woman, he beheld
His own Oneiza, his Arabian Maid. 421

THE SEVENTH BOOK

Now all is done; bring home the Bride again, Bring home the triumph of our victory! Bring home with you the glory of her gain, With joyance bring her, and with jollity. Never had man more joyful day than this, Whom Heaven would heap with bliss.

SPENSER, Epithalamium.

1

FROM fear, and from amazement, and from joy, [speech, At length the Arabian Maid recovering Threw around Thalaba her arms, and cried,

'My father! O my father!'.. Thalaba In wonder lost, yet fearing to enquire, Bent down his cheek on hers.

And their tears met, and mingled as they fell.

2

ONEIZA

At night they seized me, Thalaba! in my sleep;...

Thou wert not near, . . and yet when in their grasp

I woke, my shriek of terror called on thee.

My father could not save me, . . an old man! [my God,

And they were strong and many:... O
The hearts they must have had to hear
his prayers,

And yet to leave him childless!

THALABA

We will seek him; We will return to Araby.

ONEIZA

Alas!

We should not find him, Thalaba! Our tent

Is desolate! the wind hath heap'd the sands [is left

Within its door; the lizard's track
Fresh on the untrodden dust; prowling
by night 20

The tiger, as he passes, hears no breath

Of man, and turns to search the vacancy.

Alas! he strays a wretched wanderer

Seeking his child! old man, he will

not rest. . .

He cannot rest, . . his sleep is misery, . . His dreams are of my wretchedness, my wrongs.

O Thalaba! this is a wicked place! Let us be gone!

THALABA

But how to pass again
The iron doors that opening at a breath
Gave easy entrance? armies in their
might
31

Would fail to move those hinges for return.

ONEIZA

But we can climb the mountains that shut in

This dreadful garden.

THALABA
Are Oneiza's limbs
Equal to that long toil?

ONEIZA

Oh I am strong,

Dear Tnalaba! for this . . fear gives me
strength,

And you are with me!

3

So she took his hand, 40
And gently drew him forward, and they
went

Toward the mountain chain.

4

It was broad moonlight, and obscure or lost

The garden beauties lay,
But the great boundary rose, distinctly
mark'd.

These were no little hills,

No sloping uplands lifting to the sun
Their vineyards, with fresh verdure, and
the shade

Of ancient woods, courting the loiterer To win the easy ascent: stone mountains these, 50

Desolate rock on rock,
The burthens of the earth,
Whose snowy summits met the morning
beam

When night was in the vale, whose feet were fix'd [beheld

In the world's foundations. Thalaba
The heights precipitous,

Impending crags, rocks unascendible, And summits that had tired the eagle's wing:

'There is no way!' he said;
Paler Oneiza grew, 60
And hung upon his arm a feebler weight.

5

But soon again to hope
Revives the Arabian Maid,
As Thalaba imparts the sudden thought.
'I pass'd a river,' cried the youth,
'A full and copious stream.
The flowing waters cannot be restrain'd,

The flowing waters cannot be restrain'd, And where they find or force their way,

There we perchance may follow; thitherward

The current roll'd along.'

70

So saying, yet again in hone Quickening their eager steps, They turn'd them thitherward.

Silent and calm the river roll'd along, And at the verge arrived

Of that fair garden, o'er a rocky bed Toward the mountain-base.

Still full and silent, held its even way. But farther as they went its deepening sound

Louder and louder in the distance rose. As if it forced its stream Struggling through crags along a narrow pass. **f**course

And lo! where raving o'er a hollow The ever-flowing flood

Foams in a thousand whirlpools! There adown

The perforated rock Plunge the whole waters: so precipitous, So fathomless a fall,

That their earth-shaking roar came deaden'd up

> Like subterranean thunders. 90

' Allah save us! Oneiza cried; 'there is no path for man

From this accursed place!' And as she spake, her joints Were loosen'd, and her knees sunk under

'Cheer up, Oneiza!' Thalaba replied; Be of good heart. We cannot fly The dangers of the place, But we can conquer them!'

And the young Arab's soul 100 Arose within him; 'What is he,' he [delight, 'Who hath prepared this garden of Her soft cheek pillow'd upon moss and And wherefore are its snares?'

9

The Arabian Maid replied. 'The Women, when I enter'd, welcomed

To Paradise, by Aloadin's will Chosen, like themselves, a Houri of the Earth. [phemies.

They told me, credulous of his blas-That Aloadin placed them to reward His faithful servants with the joys of Heaven. 110

O Thalaba, and all are ready here To wreak his wicked will, and work all crimes!

How then shall we escape?'

'Woe to him!' cried the Appointed, a stern smile

Darkening with stronger shades his countenance:

'Woe to him! he hath laid his toils To take the Antelope; The Lion is come in!'

She shook her head, 'A Sorcerer he, And guarded by so many! Thalaba, . . And thou but one!'

· He raised his hand to Heaven. 'Is there not God, Oneiza? I have a Talisman, that, whose bears, Him, nor the Earthly, nor the Infernal Powers

> Of Evil, can cast down. Remember, Destiny

Hath mark'd me from mankind! Now rest in faith, and I will guard thy sleep!'

13

So on a violet bank 130 The Arabian Maid laid down, flowers.

She lay in silent prayer, Till prayer had tranquillized her fears, And sleep fell on her. By her side Silent sate Thalaba. And gazed upon the Maid, And as he gazed, drew in New courage and intenser faith, 139 And waited calmly for the eventful day.

14

Loud sung the Lark, the awaken'd Maid Beheld him twinkling in the morning light, And wish'd for wings and liberty like his. The flush of fear inflamed her cheek. But Thalaba was calm of soul. Collected for the work. He ponder'd in his mind How from Lobaba's breast His blunted arrow fell. Aloadin too might wear 150 Spell perchance of equal power To blunt the weapon's edge.

15

Beside the river-brink Grew a young poplar, whose unsteady leaves Varying their verdure to the gale, With silver glitter caught His meditating eye. Then to Oneiza turn'd the youth, And gave his father's bow. And o'er her shoulders slung 160 The quiver arrow-stored. 'Me other weapon suits,' said he: ' Bear thou the Bow: dear Maid, The days return upon me, when these shafts. [palm True to thy guidance, from the lofty Brought down its cluster, and thy gladden'd eye, [praise. Exulting, turn'd to seek the voice of Oh! yet again, Oneiza, we shall share Our desert-joys!' So saying, to the bank

With double grasp, hand below hand, he clench'd, And from its watery soil Uptore the poplar trunk.

Then off he shook the clotted earth. And broke away the head And boughs, and lesser roots; And lifting it aloft.

Wielded with able sway the massy club. 'Now for this child of Hell!' quoth Thalaba:

'Belike he shall exchange to-day 180 His dainty Paradise For other dwelling, and its cups of joy For the unallayable bitterness Of Zaccoum's fruit accurst.'

With that the Arabian youth and maid Toward the centre of the garden went. It chanced that Aloadin had convoked The garden-habitants.

And with the assembled throng Oneiza mingled, and the Appointed Youth.

Unmark'd they mingled; or if one With busier finger to his neighbour notes The quiver'd Maid, 'Haply,' he says, 'Some daughter of the Homerites, Or one who yet remembers with delight Her native tents of Himiar.' 'Nay!' reioins

His comrade, 'a love-pageant! for the **fclub** man Mimics with that fierce eye and knotty Some savage lion-tamer; she forsooth Must play the heroine of the years of old!' 200

Radiant with gems upon his throne of gold Thead Sate Aloadin: o'er the Sorcerer's

He moved, and stooping low, 170 Hover'd a Bird, and in the fragrant air

Waved his wide winnowing wings,
A living canopy.

Large as the hairy Cassowar
Was that o'ershadowing Bird;
So huge his talons, in their grasp
The Eagle would have hung a helpless

His beak was iron, and his plumes
Glitter'd like burnish'd gold, 211
And his eyes glow'd, as though an inward fire

Shone through a diamond orb.

19

The blinded multitude
Adored the Sorcerer,
And bent the knee before him,
And shouted forth his praise;
'Mighty art thou, the bestower of joy,
The Lord of Paradise!' 219
Then Aloadin rose and waved his hand.
And they stood mute, and moveless,
In idolizing awe.

20

'Children of Earth,' he said,
'Whom I have guided here
By easier passage than the gate of Death,
The infidel Sultan, to whose lands
My mountains stretch their roots,
Blasphemes and threatens me.
Strong are his armies, many are his
guards,

Yet may a dagger find him. 230
Children of Earth, I tempt ye not
With the vain promise of a bliss unseen,
With tales of a hereafter Heaven,
Whence never Traveller hath return'd!
Have ye not tasted of the cup of joy
That in these groves of happiness
For ever over-mantling tempts
The ever-thirsty lip?
Who is there here that by a deed
Of danger will deserve 240
The eternal joys of actual Paradise?'

21

'I!' Thalaba exclaim'd;
And springing forward, on the Sorcerer's
head

He dash'd his knotty club.

22

Aloadin fell not, though his skull
Was shattered by the blow,
For by some talisman
His miserable life imprison'd still
Dwelt in the body. The astonish'd

Stand motionless with fear, 250 Expecting to behold Immediate vengeance from the wrath

of Heaven.

And lo! the Bird.. the monster Bird,
Soars up.. then pounces down
To seize on Thalaba!

Now, Oneiza, bend the bow, Now draw the arrow home!..

Earth shook, Heaven thunder'd, and amid the yells
Of evil Spirits perished
The Paradise of Sin.

23

At last the earth was still;
The yelling of the Demons ceased!
Opening the wreck and ruin to their sight,

The darkness roll'd away. Alone in life,
Amid the desolation and the dead,
Stood the Destroyer and the Arabian
Maid. 270

They look'd around, the rocks were rent,
The path was open, late by magic closed;
Awe-struck and silent down the stony
glen

gien Hair thaughtful

They wound their thoughtful way.

Amid the vale below
Tents rose, and streamers play'd,
And javelins sparkled to the sun;
And multitudes encamp'd
Swarm'd, far as eye could travel o'er the

plain.

There in his war pavilion sate 280

In council with his Chiefs
The Sultan of the Land.

Before his presence there a Captain led Oneiza and the Appointed Youth.

25

'Obedient to our Lord's command,' said he, [began 'We pass'd toward the mountains, and The ascending strait: when suddenly

The ascending strait; when suddenly Earth shook,

And darkness, like the midnight, fell around,

And fire and thunder came from Heaven,
As though the Retribution-day were
come. 200

After the terror ceased, and when with hearts [on,

Somewhat assured, again we ventured This youth and woman met us on the way.

They told us, that from Aloadin's hold They came, on whom the judgement stroke hath fallen,

He and his sinful Paradise at once Destroy'd by them, the agents they of Heaven. [repeat

Therefore I brought them hither to The tale before thy presence; that as search

Shall prove it false or faithful, to their merit 1300

Thou mayest reward them.'
'Be it done to us,'

Thalaba answer'd, 'as the truth shall prove!'

26

The Sultan while he spake
Fix'd on him the proud eye of sovereignty;

'If thou hast play'd with us, By Allah and by Ali, Death shall seal The lying lips for ever! But if the thing Be as thou say'st, Arabian, thou shalt stand

Next to ourself!'... 310

Hark! while he speaks, the cry,
The lengthening cry, the increasing
shout

Of joyful multitudes!
Breathless and panting to the tent
The bearer of good tidings comes,
'O Sultan, live for ever! be thy foes
Like Aloadin all!
The wrath of God hath smitten him.'

27

Joy at the welcome tale Shone in the Sultan's check; 320 'Array the Arabian in the robe Of honour,' he exclaim'd,

'And place a chain of gold around his neck,

And bind around his brow the diadem, And mount him on my steed of state, And lead him through the camp,

And let the Heralds go before and cry,
Thus shall the Sultan reward
The man who serves him well!

28

Then in the purple robe 330
They vested Thalaba,

And hung around his neck the golden chain,

And bound his forehead with the diadem,
And on the royal steed
They led him through the camp,

And Heralds went before and cried, 'Thus shall the Sultan reward The man who serves him well!'

When from the pomp of triumph
And presence of the King, 340
Thalaba sought the tent allotted him,
Thoughtful the Arabian Maid beheld
His animated eye,

His cheek inflamed with pride.
'Oneiza!' cried the youth,
'The King hath done according to his

And made me in the land
Next to himself be named!..
But why that serious melancholy smile?
Oneiza, when I heard the voice that

gave me 350

Honour, and wealth, and fame, the instant thought [hear Arose to fill my joy, that thou would'st The tidings, and be happy.'

ONEIZA Thalaba.

Thou would'st not have me mirthful!

Am I not

An orphan, . . among strangers?

THALABA
But with me!

Jul William

ONEIZA

My Father!..

THALABA

Nay, be comforted! Last night
To what wert thou exposed! in what a
peril [wealth,
The morning found us!.. safety, honour,
These now are ours. This instant who
thou wert 36r
The Sultan ask'd. I told him from our
childhood

We had been plighted; ... was I wrong, Oneiza?

And when he said with bounties he would heap

Our nuptials, . . wilt thou blame me if I blest His will, that bade me fix the marriage day!..

In tears, my love?..

ONEIZA

REMEMBER, DESTINY

HATH MARK'D THEE FROM MANKIND!

THALABA

Perhaps when Aloadin was destroy'd
The mission ceased; and therefore
Providence 371

With its rewards and blessings strews my path

Thus for the accomplished service.

ONEIZA

Thalaba!

THALABA

Or if haply not, yet whither should I go?

Is it not prudent to abide in peace

Till I am summon'd?

ONEIZA

Take me to the Deserts!

THALABA

But Moath is not there; and would'st
thou dwell [might seek
In a stranger's tent? thy father then
In long and fruitless wandering for his
child. 381

ONEIZA

Take me then to Mecca!

There let me dwell a servant of the
Temple. [eye
Bind thou thyself my veil, . . to human

It never shall be lifted. There, whilst thou [prayers.

Shalt go upon thine enterprize, my Dear Thalaba! shall rise to succour thee, And I shall live, . . if not in happiness, Surely in hope.

THALABA

Oh think of better things! 390
The will of Heaven is plain! by wondrous ways [voice
It led us here, and soon the common

Will tell what we have done, and how we dwell

Under the shadow of the Sultan's wing; So shall thy father hear the fame, and find us [tears!

What he hath wish'd us ever . . Still in Still that unwilling eye! nay . . nay . . Oneiza . .

I dare not leave thee other than my

My wedded wife. Honour and gratitude
As yet preserve the Sultan from all
thoughts 400

That sin against thee; but so sure as

Hath gifted thee above all other maids With loveliness, so surely would those thoughts

Of wrong arise within the heart of Power. If thou art mine, Oneiza, we are safe, But else, there is no sanctuary could save.

ONEIZA

Thalaba! Thalaba!

30

With song, with music, and with dance,
The bridal pomp proceeds.
Following the deep-veil'd Bride 410
Fifty female slaves attend
In costly robes that gleam
With interwoven gold,
And sparkle far with gems.

An hundred slaves behind them bear Vessels of silver and vessels of gold, And many a gorgeous garment gay, The presents that the Sultan gave.

On either hand the pages go 419
With torches flaring through the gloom,
And trump and timbrel merriment
Accompanies their way;

And multitudes with loud acclaim Shout blessings on the Bride.

And now they reach the palace pile, The palace home of Thalaba, And now the marriage feast is spread, And from the finish'd banquet now The wedding guests are gone.

31

Who comes from the bridal chamber?..
It is Azrael, the Angel of Death. 431

THE EIGHTH BOOK

Quas potius decuit nostro te inferre sepulchro.

Petronilla, tibi spargimus has lacrimas. Spargimus has lacrimas moesti monumenta parentis,—

Et tibi pro thalamo sternimus hunc tumulum.

Sperabam genitor taedas praeferre jugales, Et titulo patris jungere nomen avi; Heu! gener est Orcus; quique, O dulcissima! per te

Se sperabat avum, desinit esse pater.

Joach. Bellaius.

1

WOMAN

Go not among the tombs, Old Man! There is a madman there.

OLD MAN

Will he harm me if I go?

WOMAN

Not he, poor miserable man!
But 'tis a wretched sight to see
His utter wretchedness.
For all day long he lies on a grave,

And never is he seen to weep,
And never is he heard to groan,
Nor ever at the hour of prayer re
Bends his knee nor moves his lips.
I have taken him food for charity,

And never a word he spake:
But yet so ghastly he look'd,
That I have awaken'd at night

With the dream of his ghastly eyes. Now, go not among the Tombs, Old Man!

OLD MAN

Wherefore has the wrath of God So sorely stricken him?

WOMAN

He came a stranger to the land, 20 And did good service to the Sultan. And well his service was rewarded. The Sultan named him next himself, And gave a palace for his dwelling, And dower'd his bride with rich domains. But on his wedding night There came the Angel of Death. Since that hour, a man distracted Among the sepulchres he wanders. The Sultan, when he heard the tale, Said that for some untold crime 31 Judgement thus had stricken him, And asking Heaven forgiveness That he had shown him favour, Abandon'd him to want.

OLD MAN
A Stranger did you say?

WOMAN

An Arab born, like you. But go not among the Tombs, For the sight of his wretchedness Might make a hard heart ache!

OLD MAN

Nay, nay, I never yet have shunn'd A countryman in distress! And the sound of his dear native tongue May be like the voice of a friend.

2

Then to the Sepulchro
Whereto she pointed him,
Old Moath bent his way.
By the tomb lay Thalaba,
In the light of the setting eve;
The sun, and the wind, and the rain, 50
Had rusted his raven locks;
His cheeks were fallen in,
His face-bones prominent;
Reclined against the tomb he lay,
And his lean fingers play'd,
Unwitting, with the grass that grew
beside.

3

The Old Man knew him not,
But drawing near him, said,
'Countryman, peace be with thee!'
The sound of his dear native tongue 60
Awaken'd Thalaba:

He raised his countenance,
And saw the good Old Man,
And he arose and fell upon his neck,
And groan'd in bitterness.
Then Moath knew the youth,
And fear'd that he was childless; and
he turned
His asking eyes, and pointed to the

tomb.
'Old Man!' cried Thalaba,
'Thy search is ended here!' 70

4

The father's cheek grew white,
And his lip quiver'd with the misery;
Howbeit, collectedly, with painful voice
He answer'd, 'God is good! His will
be done!'

5

The woe in which he spake,
The resignation that inspired his speech,
They soften'd Thalaba.
'Thou hast a solace in thy grief,' he
cried,

'A comforter within!
Moath! thou seest me here,
Deliver'd to the Evil Powers,
A God-abandon'd wretch.'

6

The Old Man look'd at him incredulous.

'Nightly,' the youth pursued,

'Thy daughter comes to drive me to despair.

Moath, thou thinkest me mad;
But when the Cryer from the Minaret
Proclaims the midnight hour,
Hast thou a heart to see her?

In the Meidan now
The clang of clarions and of drums
Accompanied the Sun's descent.
'Dost thou not pray, my son?'
Said Moath, as he saw
The white flag waving on the neighbouring Mosque:
Then Thalaba's eye grew wild,
'Pray!' echoed he; 'I must not pray!'
And the hollow groan he gave
Went to the Old Man's heart.
And bowing down his face to earth,
In fervent agony he call'd on God. 101

8

A night of darkness and of storms!

Into the Chamber of the Tomb
Thalaba led the Old Man,
To roof him from the rain.
A night of storms! the wind
Swept through the moonless sky,
And moan'd among the pillar'd sepulchres;

And in the pauses of its sweep
They heard the heavy rain
Beat on the monument above.
In silence on Onciza's grave
Her Father and her husband sate.

Q

The Cryer from the Minaret
Proclaim'd the midnight hour.
'Now, now!' cried Thalaba;
And o'er the chamber of the tomb
There spread a lurid gleam,
Like the reflection of a sulphur fire;
And in that hideous light
120
Oneiza stood before them. It was She,..
Her very lineaments,.. and such as death
Had changed them, livid cheeks, and
lips of blue;

But in her eyes there dwelt
Brightness more terrible
Than all the loathsomeness of death.
'Still art thou living, wretch?'

In hollow tones she cried to Thalaba;

'And must I nightly leave my grave
To tell thee, still in vain, 130
God hath abandon'd thee?'

10

'This is not she!' the Old Man exclaim'd;

'A Fiend; a manifest Fiend!'
And to the youth he held his lance;
'Strike, and deliver thyself!'
'Strike Her!' cried Thalaba,
And, palsied of all power,
Gazed fixedly upon the dreadful form.
'Yea, strike her!' cried a voice, whose tones

Flow'd with such sudden healing through
his soul,
140
As when the desert shower

From death deliver'd him;
But unobedient to that well-known voice,
His eye was seeking it,
When Moath, firm of heart,
Perform'd the bidding: through the
vampire corpse

He thrust his lance; it fell, And howling with the wound, Its fiendish tenant fled.

A sapphire light fell on them, 150 And garmented with glory, in their sight Oneiza's Spirit stood.

11

'O Thalaba!' she cried,
'Abandon not thyself!
Would'st thou for ever lose me?..O
my husband,

Co and fulfil thy quest,
That in the Bowers of Paradise
I may not look for thee
In vain, nor wait thee long.'

12

To Moath then the Spirit 160
Turn'd the dark lustre of her heavenly
eyes:

'Short is thy destined path, O my dear Father! to the abode of bliss. Return to Araby,

There with the thought of death Comfort thy lonely age, And Azrael, the Deliverer, soon Will visit thee in peace.'

They stood with earnest eyes, 160 And arms out-reaching, when again The darkness closed around them. The soul of Thalaba revived: He from the floor his quiver took. And as he bent the bow, exclaim'd, 'Was it the over-ruling Providence That in the hour of frenzy led my hands Instinctively to this? fanew To-morrow, and the sun shall brace The slacken'd cord, that now sounds loose and damp; To-morrow, and its livelier tone will sing, In tort vibration to the arrow's flight. I.. but I also, with recover'd health Of heart, shall do my duty. My Father! here I leave thee then!' he cried.

'And not to meet again, Till at the gate of Paradise The eternal union of our joys commence. We parted last in darkness!' . . and the youth

Thought with what other hopes; But now his heart was calm, For on his soul a heavenly hope had dawn'd.

The Old Man answered nothing, but he held

His garment, and to the door Of the Tomb Chamber followed him. The rain had ceased, the sky was wild, Its black clouds broken by the storm. And, lo! it chanced, that in the chasm Of Heaven between, a star,

Leaving along its path continuous light, Shot eastward. 'See my guide!' quoth Thalaba:

And turning, he received Old Moath's last embrace, [Man. And the last blessing of the good Old

Evening was drawing nigh, When an old Dervise, sitting in the sun At his cell door, invited for the night

The traveller; in the sun

He spread the plain repast, Rice and fresh grapes, and at their feet there flowed

The brook of which they drank. 210

16

So as they sate at meal, With song, with music, and with dance, A wedding train went by; The deep-veil'd bride, the female slaves, The torches of festivity,

And trump and timbrol merriment Accompanied their way. The good old Dervise gave A blessing as they pass'd:

But Thalaba look'd on, 220 And breathed a low deep groan, and hid

his face. ffelt The Dervise had known sorrow, and he Compassion; and his words Of pity and of piety Open'd the young man's heart, And he told all his tale.

'Repine not, O my Son!' the Old Man replied,

'That Heaven hath chasten'd thee. Behold this vine.

I found it a wild tree, whose wanton strength

Had swoln into irregular twigs 230 And bold excrescences. And spent itself in leaves and little rings, So in the flourish of its outwardness
Wasting the sap and strength
That should have given forth fruit.
But when I pruned the plant,
Then it grew temperate in its vain expense [see'st,
Of useless leaves, and knotted, as thou
Into these full clear clusters, to repay
The hand that wisely wounded it.
Repine not, O my Son! 241
In wisdom and in mercy Heaven inflicts
Its painful remedies.'

18

Then pausing, . . 'Whither goest thou now?' he ask'd.
'I know not,' answered Thalaba;
'My purpose is to hold
Straight on, secure of this,
That travel where I will, I cannot stray,
For Destiny will lead my course aright.'

'Far be it from me,' the Old Man

replied, 250
'To shake that pious confidence;
And yet, if knowledge may be gain'd,
methinks

Thy course should be to seek it painfully.

In Kaf the Simorg hath his dwelling
place, [seen
The all-knowing Bird of Ages, who hath

The all-knowing Bird of Ages, who hath The World, with all its children, thrice destroy'd.

Long is the path,

And difficult the way, of danger full;

But that unerring Bird

Could to a certain end

Direct thy weary search.'

20

Easy assent the youth
Gave to the words of wisdom; and
behold [Kaf.
At dawn, the adventurer on his way to
And he hath travelled many a day,

And many a river swum over,

And many a mountain ridge hath crost,

And many a measureless plain;

And now amid the wilds advanced,

Long is it since his eyes 270

Have seen the trace of man.

21

Cold! cold! 'tis a chilly clime
That the youth in his journey hath
reach'd,
And he is aweary now,

And faint for lack of food.

Cold! cold! there is no Sun in Heaven,
A heavy and uniform cloud
Overspreads the face of the sky,
And the snows are beginning to fall.

Dost thou wish for thy deserts, O Son of
Hodeirah?

280

Dost thou long for the gales of Arabia?

Cold! cold! his blood flows languidly,
His hands are red, his lips are blue,
His feet are sore with the frost.

Cheer thee! cheer thee! Thalaba!

A little yet bear up!

22

All waste! no sign of life
But the track of the wolf and the bear!
No sound but the wild, wild wind,
And the snow crunching under his feet!
Night is come; neither moon, nor stars,
Only the light of the snow! 292
But behold a fire in a cave of the hill,
A heart-reviving fire;
And thither with strength renew'd

nd thither with strength renew'd Thalaba presses on.

23

He found a Woman in the cave,
A solitary Woman,
Who by the fire was spinning,
And singing as she spun. 300
The pine boughs were cheerfully blazing,
And her face was bright with the flame;
Her face was as a Damsel's face,

And yet her hair was grey.

She bade him welcome with a smile,
And still continued spinning,
And singing as she spun.

The thread the woman drew
Was finer than the silkworm's,
Was finer than the gossamer; 310

The song she sung was low and sweet,
But Thalaba knew not the words.

24

He laid his bow before the hearth, For the string was frozen stiff: He took the quiver from his neck, For the arrow-plumes were iced. Then as the cheerful fire Revived his languid limbs, The adventurer ask'd for food. The Woman answer'd him. 320 And still her speech was song: 'The She Bear she dwells near to me. And she hath cubs, one, two, and three: She hunts the deer, and brings him here, And then with her I make good cheer: And now to the chase the She Bear is gone,

And she with her prey will be here anon.'

25

She ceased her spinning while she spake;
And when she had answer'd him,
Again her fingers twirl'd the thread,
And again the Woman began, 331
In low, sweet tones to sing
The unintelligible song.

26

The thread she spun it gleam'd like gold
In the light of the odorous fire,
Yet was it so wondrously thin,
That, save when it shone in the light,
You might look for it closely in vain.
The youth sate watching it,
And she observed his wonder,
And then again she spake,
And still her speech was song;

'Now twine it round thy hands I say,
Now twine it round thy hands I pray!
My thread is small, my thread is fine,
But he must be
A stronger than thee,
Who can break this thread of mine!'

27

And up she raised her bright blue eyes,
And sweetly she smiled on him, 350
And he conceived no ill;
And round and round his right hand,
And round and round his left,
He wound the thread so fine.
And then again the Woman spake,
And still her speech was song,
'Now thy strength, O Stranger, strain!
Now then break the slender chain.'

28

Thalaba strove, but the thread
By magic hands was spun, 360
And in his check the flush of shame
Arose, commixt with fear.
She beheld and laugh'd at him
And then again she sung,
'My thread is small, my thread is fine,
But he must be
A stronger than thee,
Who can break this thread of mine!'

29 And up she raised her bright blue eyes,

'I thank thee, I thank thee, Hodeirah's

And fiercely she smiled on him: 370

son! [undone,
I thank thee for doing what can't be
For binding thyself in the chain I have
spun!'
Then from his head she wrench'd

A lock of his raven hair,
And cast it in the fire,
And cried aloud as it burnt,
'Sister! Sister! hear my voice!
Sister! Sister! come and rejoice!
The thread is spun,
380

The prize is won,
The work is done,
For I have made captive Hodeirah's
Son.'

30

Borne in her magic car
The Sister Sorceress came,
Khawla, the fiercest of the Sorcerer brood.
She gazed upon the youth,
She bade him break the slender thread,
She laugh'd aloud for scorn,
She clapt her hands for joy.

31

The She Bear from the chase came in, She bore the prey in her bloody mouth, She laid it at Maimuna's feet, And then look'd up with wistful eyes

As if to ask her share.

'There! there!' quoth Maimuna,
And pointing to the prisoner-youth,
She spurn'd him with her foot,
And bade her make her meal.
But then their mockery fail'd them, 400
And anger and shame arose;
For the She Bear fawn'd on Thalaba,
And quietly lick'd his hand.

32

The grey-hair'd Sorceress stampt the ground,

And call'd a Spirit up;
'Shall we bear the Enemy
To the dungeon dens below?'

SPIRIT

Woe! woe! to our Empire woe! If ever he tread the caverns below.

MAIMUNA

Shall we leave him fetter'd here 410 With hunger and cold to die?

SPIRIT

Away from thy lonely dwelling fly!

Here I see a danger nigh,

That he should live and thou should'st

'die.

MAIMUNA

Whither then must we bear the foe?

SPIRIT

To Mohareb's island go, There shalt thou secure the foe, There prevent thy future woe.

33

Then in the Car they throw
The fetter'd Thalaba,
And took their seats, and set
Their feet upon his neck;
Maimuna held the reins,
And Khawla shook the scourge,
And away! away! away!

34

They were no steeds of mortal race
That drew the magic car
With the swiftness of feet and of wings.
The snow-dust rises behind them,
The ice-rock's splinters fly,
And hark in the valley below
The sound of their chariot wheels...
And they are far over the mountains!
Away! away! away!

The Demons of the air
Shout their joy as the Sisters pass,
The Ghosts of the Wicked that wander
by night

Flit over the magic car.

35

Away! away! away!
Over the hills and the plains,
Over the rivers and rocks,
Over the sands of the shore;
The waves of ocean heave
Under the magic steeds;
With unwet hoofs they trample the deep,
And now they reach the Island coast,
And away to the city the Monarch's abode.

Open fly the city gates,
Open fly the iron doors,
The doors of the palace-court.
Then stopt the charmed car.

The Monarch heard the chariot wheels,
And forth he came to greet
The mistress whom he served.
He knew the captive youth,
And Thalaba beheld
Mohareb in the robes of royalty,
Whom erst his arm had thrust
Down the bitumen pit.

THE NINTH BOOK

Conscience!..

Poor plodding Priests and preaching Friars may make
Their hollow pulpits and the empty aisles
Of churches ring with that round word: but
we,
That draw the subtile and more piercing air
In that sublimed region of a court,
Know all is good we make so, and go on
Secured by the prosperity of our crimes.
B. JONSON, Mortimer's Fall.

1
'Go up my Sister Maimuna,
Go up and read the stars!'

2

Lo! on the terrace of the topmost tower She stands; her darkening eyes, Her fine face raised to Heaven; Her white hair flowing like the silver streams That streak the northern night.

3

They hear her coming tread,
They lift their asking eyes:
Her face is serious, her unwilling lips
Slow to the tale of ill.
'What hast thou read? what hast thou
read?'

Quoth Khawla in alarm.
'Danger . . death . . judgement!'
Maimuna replied.

4

'Is that the language of the lights of Heaven?'

Exclaim'd the sterner Witch;
'Creatures of Allah, they perform his
will, [daunt

And with their lying menaces would
Our credulous folly... Maimuna,
I never liked this uncongenial lore! 20
Better befits to make the Sacrifice
Of Divination; so shall I

Be mine own Oracle.

Command the victims thou, O King!

Male and female they must be,

Thou knowest the needful rites.

Meanwhile I purify the place.'

5

The Sultan went; the Sorceress rose, And North, and South, and East, and West.

She faced the points of Heaven; 30
And ever where she turn'd
She laid her hand upon the wall;
And up she look'd, and smote the air,
And down she stoopt, and smote the
floor.

'To Eblis and his servants
I consecrate the place;
Let enter none but they!
Whatever hath the breath of life,
Whatever hath the sap of life,
Let it be blasted and die!'

ß

Now all is prepared;
Mohareb returns,
The Circle is drawn,
The Victims have bled,
The Youth and the Maid.

She in the circle holds in either hand, Clench'd by the hair, a head, The heads of the Youth and the Maid. 'Go out, ye lights!' quoth Khawla,

And in darkness began the spell. 50

With spreading arms she whirls around Rapidly, rapidly, Ever around and around: And loudly she calls the while. 'Eblis! Eblis!' Loudly, incessantly, Still she calls, 'Eblis! Eblis!' Giddily, giddily, still she whirls, Loudly, incessantly, still she calls: The motion is ever the same. 60 Ever around and around: The calling is still the same, Still it is, 'Eblis! Eblis!' Till her voice is a shapeless vell, And dizzily rolls her brain. And now she is full of the Fiend. She stops, she rocks, she reels! Look! look! she appears in the dark-

Her flamy hairs curl up
All living, like the Meteor's locks of light! 70

Her eyes are like the sickly Moon!

8

It is her lips that move,
Her tongue that shapes the sound;
But whose is the Voice that proceeds?..
'Ye may hope and ye may fear,
The danger of his stars is near.
Sultan! if he perish, woe!
Fate hath written one death-blow
For Mohareb and the Foe!
Triumph; triumph! only she 80
That knit his bonds can set him free.'

9

She spake the Oracle,
And senselessly she fell.
They knelt in care beside her,..
Her Sister and the King;
They sprinkled her palms with water,
They wetted her nostrils with blood.

10

She wakes as from a dream,
She asks the utter'd voice;
But when she heard, an anger and a
grief 90

Darken'd her wrinkling brow.
'Then let him live in long captivity!'
She answer'd: but Mohareb's quicken'd

eye

Perused her sullen countenance,
That lied not with the lips.
A miserable man!
What boots it that in central caves,
The Powers of Evil at his Baptism
pledged

The Sacrament of Hell?
His death secures them now.
What boots it that they gave
Abdaldar's guardian ring,
When, through another's life,
The blow may reach his own?

11

He sought the dungeon cell

Where Thalaba was laid.

'Twas the grey morning twilight, and
the voice

Of Thalaba in prayer [his ear. With words of hallow'd import smote The grating of the heavy hinge 110 Roused not the Arabian youth; Nor lifted he his earthward face,

At sound of coming feet.

Nor did Mohareb with unholy speech
Disturb the duty: silent, spirit-awed,
Envious, heart-humbled, he beheld
The peace which piety alone can give.

12

When Thalaba, the perfect rite perform'd, [Island-Chief: Raised his calm eye, then spake the 'Arab! my guidance through the dangerous Cave 120

Thy service overpaid,

An unintended friend in enmity. The Hand that caught thy ring Received and bore me to the scene I sought. Now know me grateful. I return That amulet, thy only safety here.' Artful he spake, with show of gratitude Veiling the selfish deed. Lock'd in his magic chain, Thalaba on his passive powerless hand Received again the Spell. Remembering then with what an ominous faith First he drew on the ring, The youth repeats his words of augury; 'In God's name and the Prophet's! be its power [evil. Good, let it serve the righteous! if for God and my trust in Him shall hallow it. Blindly the wicked work

The righteous will of Heaven!' So Thalaba received again 140 The written ring of gold. 14 Thoughtful awhile Mohareb stood, And eyed the captive youth. Then, building skilfully sophistic speech, Thus he began. 'Brave art thou, Thalaba! [would buy And wherefore are we foes?.. for I Thy friendship at a princely price, and make thee To thine own welfare wise. Hear me! in Nature are two hostile Gods. Makers and Masters of existing things, Equal in power: . . nay, hear me patiently!.. 151 Equal . . for look around thee! The same Earth [Camel finds Bears fruit and poison; where the His fragrant food, the horned Viper Nor searching doubt, nor judgement there

87 Sucks in the juice of death: the Elements Now serve the use of man, and now assert fhear Dominion o'er his weakness: dost thou The sound of merriment and nuptial song? [mourner's cry, From the next house proceeds the Lamenting o'er the dead. Sav'st thou that Sin Enter'd the world of Allah? that the Fiend. Permitted for a season, prowls for prey? When to thy tent the venomous serpent creeps, So, Dost thou not crush the reptile? Even Be sure, had Allah crush'd his Enemy, But that the power was wanting. From the first. Eternal as themselves their warfare is: To the end it must endure. Evil and I the strife Good . . What are they, Thalaba, but words? in Of Angels, as of Men, the weak are guilty; Power must decide. The Spirits of the Dead Quitting their mortal mansion, enter not. As falsely ye are preach'd, their final Of bliss, or bale; nor in the sepulchre Sleep they the long, long sleep: each joins the host Of his great leader, aiding in the war Whose fate involves his own. Woe to the vanquish'd then! Wee to the sons of man who follow'd him! [cternity. They, with their Leader, through Must howl in central fires. Thou, Thalaba, hast chosen ill thy part, If choice it may be call'd, where will

was not.

wise to weigh.

Hard is the service of the Power. beneath [discipline Whose banners thou wert born; his Severe, yea cruel; and his wages, rich Only in promise; who hath seen the fours, pay ? For us.. the pleasures of the world are Riches and rule, the kingdoms of the Earth. We met in Babylon adventurers both, Each zealous for the hostile Power he served : We meet again; thou feelest what thou Thou seest what I am, the Sultan here, The Lord of Life and Death. Abandon him who has abandon'd thee. And be, as I am, great among mankind!' 15 The Captive did not, hasty to confute, Break off that subtle speech; But when the expectant silence of the King Look'd for his answer, then spake Thalaba. 'And this then is thy faith! this monstrous creed! [Stars. This lie against the Sun, and Moon, and And Earth, and Heaven! Blind man, who canst not see How all things work the best! who wilt not know, [whate'er That in the Manhood of the World, Of folly mark'd its Infancy, of vice Sullied its Youth, ripe Wisdom shall cast off, Isafe. Stablish'd in good, and, knowing evil, Sultan Mohareb, yes, ye have me here In chains: but not forsaken, though opprest; 211 Cast down, but not destroy'd. Shall danger daunt, Shall death dismay his soul, whose life

is given

For God, and for his brethren of mankind? Alike rewarded, in that holy cause, The Conqueror's and the Martyr's palm above my blood Hope ye that Beam with one glory. Can quench the dreaded flame? and know ye not, [and Wise, That leagued against ye are the Just And all Good Actions of all ages past, Yea, your own crimes, and Truth, and God in Heaven?' 221

'Slave!' quoth Mohareb, and his lip Quiver'd with eager wrath, 'I have thee! thou shalt feel my power, And in thy dungeon loathsomeness Rot piece-meal, limb from limb!' And out the Tyrant rushes, And all impatient of the thoughts That canker'd in his heart. Seeks in the giddiness of boisterous sport Short respite from the avenging power

> within. 17

What Woman is she So wrinkled and old, That goes to the wood? She leans on her staff With a tottering step, She tells her bead-string slow Through fingers dull'd by age. The wanton boys bemock her: The babe in arms that meets her 240 Turns round with quick affright And clings to his nurse's neck.

18

Hark! hark! the hunter's cry; Mohareb has gone to the chase. The dogs, with eager velp. Are struggling to be free; The hawks in frequent stoop

Token their haste for flight: And couchant on the saddle-bow. With tranquil eyes and talons sheathed. The ounce expects his liberty. 251

Propt on the staff that shakes Beneath her trembling weight, The Old Woman sees them pass. Halloa! halloa! The game is up! The dogs are loosed, The deer bounds over the plain: The dogs pursue 260

Far. far behind Though at full stretch, With eager speed, Far. far behind. But lo! the Falcon o'er his head

Hovers with hostile wings, And buffets him with blinding strokes! Dizzy with the deafening strokes In blind and interrupted course, Poor beast, he struggles on; And now the dogs are nigh! 270 How his heart pants! you see The panting of his heart; And tears like human tears Roll down, along the big veins fever-

[dun hide; And now the death-sweat darkens his His fear, his groans, his agony, his death, Are the sport, and the joy, and the triumph!

swoln:

20

Halloa! another prey, The nimble Antelope! The ounce is freed; one spring, 280 And his talons are sheathed in her shoulders.

And his teeth are red in her gore. There came a sound from the wood, Like the howl of the winter wind at night,

Around a lonely dwelling;

The ounce, whose gums were warm in his prey,

He hears the summoning sound. In vain his master's voice. No longer dreaded now. Calls and recalls with threatful tone: Away to the forest he goes; For that Old Woman had laid [lips. Her shrivell'd finger on her shrivell'd And whistled with a long, long breath; And that long breath was the sound

Like the howl of the winter wind at night. Around a lonely dwelling.

21

Mohareb knew her not. As to the chase he went, The glance of his proud eye Passing in scorn o'er age and wretched-

She stands in the depth of the wood. And panting to her feet, Fawning and fearful, creeps The ounce by charms constrain'd. Well may'st thou fear, and vainly dost thou fawn!

Her form is changed, her visage new, Her power, her art the same! It is Khawla that stands in the wood.

She knew the place where the Mandrake And round the neck of the ounce.

And round the Mandrake's head, She tightens the ends of her cord. Her cars are closed with wax. And her prest finger fastens them, Deaf as the Adder, when, with grounded head.

And circled form, both avenues of sound Barr'd safely, one slant eye Watches the charmer's lips

Waste on the wind his baffled witchery, The spotted ounce so beautiful,

Springs forceful from the scourge: With that the dving plant all agony. Feeling its life-strings crack, Utter'd the unimaginable groan That none can hear and live.

Then from her victim servant Khawla [hand,

The precious poison. Next with naked She pluck'd the boughs of the manchineel:

And of the wormy wax she took, 330 That, from the perforated tree forced

Bewray'd its insect-parent's work within.

24

In a cavern of the wood she sits. And moulds the wax to human form: And, as her fingers kneaded it, By magic accents, to the mystic shape, Imparted with the life of Thalaba, In all its passive powers, Mysterious sympathy. With the mandrake and the manchineel

She builds her pile accurst. She lays her finger to the pile, And blue and green the flesh Glows with emitted fire.

A fire to kindle that strange fuel meet.

Before the fire she placed the imaged

'There, waste away!' the Enchantress 'And with thee waste Hodeirah's Son!'

26

Fool! fool! go thaw the everlasting ice, Whose polar mountains bound the human reign. 350 Blindly the wicked work The righteous will of Heaven!

The doom'd Destroyer wears Abdaldar's ring:

Against the danger of his horoscope

Yourselves have shielded him; And on the sympathizing wax, The unadmitted flames play powerlessly. snow. As the cold moon-beam on a plain of

27

'Curse thee! curse thee!' cried the fiendly woman,

'Hast thou yet a spell of safety?' 360 And in the raging flames She threw the imaged wax. It lay amid the flames, Like Polycarp of old,

When, by the glories of the burning stake

O'er-vaulted, his grey hairs Curl'd, life-like, to the fire That haloed round his saintly brow.

'Wherefore is this!' cried Khawla, and she stampt

Thrice on the cavern floor: 370 'Maimuna! Maimuna!'

Thrice on the floor she stampt, Then to the rocky gateway glanced Her eager eyes, and Maimuna was there. 'Nay, Sister, nay!' quoth she, 'Mohareb's life

Is link'd with Thalaba's! Nay, Sister, nay! the plighted oath! The common sacrament!'

'Idiot!' said Khawla, 'one must die, or all!

Faith kept with him were treason to the rest.

Why lies the wax like marble in the fire? What powerful amulet Protects Hodeirah's Son?'

Cold, marble-cold, the wax Lay on the raging pile. Cold in that white intensity of fire.

32 The Bat, that with her hook'd and 'Excellent Witch!' leathery wings quoth Khawla Clung to the cave-roof, loosed her hold, and she went Death-sickening with the heat; To the cave-arch of entrance, and The Toad, which to the darkest nook scowl'd up, had crawl'd. Mocking the blessed Sun: 'Shine thou in Heaven, but I will Panted fast with fever pain: The Viper from her nest came forth, shadow Earth! Leading her quicken'd brood, Thou wilt not shorten day. That, sportive with the warm delight, But I will hasten darkness!' Then the roll'd out rings, Witch Their thin curls, tender as the tendril Began a magic song, One long low tone, through teeth half-Ere the green beauty of their brittle youth summer sun. closed. Islow: Grows brown, and toughens in the Through lips slow-moving, muttered Cold, marble-cold, the wax One long-continued breath, Lay on the raging pile, Till to her eyes a darker yellowness The silver quivering of the element 400 Was driven, and fuller-swoln the pro-O'er its pale surface shedding a dim gloss. minent veins On her loose throat grew black. 31 looking upward, thrice she Amid the red and fiery smoke, breathed Watching the portent strange, Into the face of Heaven: The blue-eved Sorceress and her Sister The baneful breath infected Heaven: stood, A mildewing fog it spread Seeming a ruined Angel by the side Darker and darker: so the evening sun Of Spirit born in hell. Pour'd his unentering glory on the mist. Maimuna raised at length her thought-And it was night below. ful eves: 'Whence, Sister, was the wax? 'Bring now the wax,' quoth Khawla, The work of the worm, or the bee? 'for thou know'st Nay then I marvel not! The mine that yields it.' Forth went It were as wise to bring from Ararat Maimuna. Iforth: The fore-world's wood to build the In mist and darkness went the Sorceress magic pile. And she hath reach'd the Place of Tombs, And feed it from the balm bower. And in their sepulchres the Dead through whose veins **fout** Feel feet unholy trampling over them. The Martyr's blood sends such a virtue That the fond mother from beneath its shade [playful child. Thou startest, Maimuna, Wreathes the horn'd viper round her Because the breeze is in thy lifted locks! This is the eternal, universal strife! Is Khawla's spell so weak? There is a Grave-wax. . . I have seen the Sudden came the breeze and strong: The heavy mist wherewith the lungs Gouls [ing.' ...

opprest

Fight for the dainty at their banquet-

Were labouring late, flies now before the gale,

Thin as an infant's breath,
Seen in the sunshine of an autumn frost.
Sudden it came, and soon its work
was done,

And suddenly it ceased;
Cloudless and calm it left the firmament,
And beautiful in the blue sky
Arose the summer Moon.

35

She heard the quicken'd action of her blood,

She felt the fever in her checks. 460
Daunted, yet desperate, in a tomb
Entering, with impious hand she traced
Circles and squares and trines
And magic characters,
Till, riven by her charms, the tomb
Yawn'd and disclosed its dead;
Maimuna's eyes were open'd, and she saw
The secrets of the Grave.

36

There sate a Spirit in the vault, 469
In shape, in hue, in lineaments, like life;
And by him couch'd, as if intranced,
The hundred-headed Worm that never
dies.

37

'Nay, Sorceress! not to-night!' the
Spirit cried, [to-night
'The flesh in which I sinn'd may rest
From suffering; all things, even I,
to-night,

Even the Damn'd, repose!'

38

The flesh of Maimuna [knees
Crept on her bones with terror, and her
Trembled with their trembling weight.
'Only this Sabbath! and at dawn the
Worm 480
Will wake, and this poor flesh must grow
to meet

The gnawing of his hundred poisonmouths! [death!' God! God! is there no mercy after

30

Soul-struck, she rush'd away,
She fled the Place of Tombs,
She cast herself upon the earth,
All agony, and tumult, and despair.
And in that wild and desperate agony
Sure Maimuna had died the utter death,
If aught of evil had been possible
On this mysterious night;
491

For this was that most holy night
When all Created Things adore
The Power that made them; Insects,
Beasts, and Birds.

The Water-Dwellers, Herbs, and Trees, and Stones,

Yea, Earth and Ocean, and the infinite
Heaven, [know
With all its Worlds. Man only doth not
The universal Sabbath, doth not join
With Nature in her homage. Yet the
prayer [love,

Flows from the righteous with intenser A holier calm succeeds, and sweeter dreams 501

Visit the slumbers of the penitent.

40

Therefore on Maimuna the Elements
Shed healing; every breath she drew
was balm. [up

For every flower sent then in incense
Its richest odours; and the song of birds
Now, like the music of the Scraphim,
Enter'd her soul, and now

Made silence aweful by their sudden pause.

It seem'd as if the quiet Moon 510 Pour'd quietness; its lovely light Was like the smile of reconciling Heaven.

41

Is it the dew of night That on her glowing cheek Shines in the moon-beam? Oh! she
weeps.. she weeps!
And the Good Angel that abandoned her
At her hell-baptism, by her tears drawn
down,

Resumes his charge. Then Maimuna
Recall'd to mind the double oracle;
Quick as the lightning flash 520
Its import glanced upon her, and the hope
Of pardon and salvation rose,
As now she understood
The lying prophecy of truth.
She pauses not, she ponders not;
The driven air before her fann'd the face
Of Thalaba, and he awoke and saw
The Sorceress of the Silver Locks.

42

One more permitted spell.

She takes the magic thread. 530

With the wide eye of wonder, Thalaba
Watches her snowy fingers round and
round.

Unwind the loosening chain.

Again he hears the low sweet voice,
The low sweet voice so musical,
That sure it was not strange,
If in those unintelligible tones
Was more than human potency,
That with such deep and undefined delight

Fill'd the surrender'd soul. 540
The work is done, the song hath ceased;
He wakes as from a dream of Paradise,
And feels his fetters gone, and with
the burst
Of wondering adoration, praises God.

43

Hercharm hath loosed the chain it bound,
But massy walls and iron gates
Confine Hodeirah's Son.

Heard ye not, Genii of the Air, her spell,
That o'er her face there flits
The sudden flush of fear? 550

Again her louder lips repeat the charm;

Her eye is anxious, her cheek pale, Her pulse plays fast and feeble. Nay, Maimuna! thy power hath ceased, And the wind scatters now The voice which ruled it late.

44

'Be comforted, my soul!' she cried,
her eyo [forted!
Brightening with sudden joy, 'be comWe have burst through the bonds which
bound us down

To utter death; our covenant with Hell
Is blotted out! The Lord hath given
me strength!
561

Great is the Lord, and merciful! Hear me, ye rebel Spirits! in the name Of Allah and the Prophet, hear the spell!

45

Groans then were heard, the prison walls were rent,

The whirlwind wrapt them round, and forth they flew,

Borne in the chariot of the Winds abroad.

THE TENTH BOOK

And the Angel that was sent unto me said, Thinkest thou to comprehend the way of the Most High!. Then said I, Yea, my Lord. And he answered me, and said, I am sent to shew thee three ways, and to set forth three similitudes before thee; whereof if thou canst declare me one, I will shew thee also the way that thou desirest to see, and I shall shew thee from whence the wicked heart cometh. And I said, Tell on, my Lord. Then said he unto me, Go thy way, weigh me the weight of the fire, or measure me the blast of the wind, or call me again the day that is past.—Esdras, ii. 4.

1

ERE there was time for wonder or for fear,
The way was pass'd, and lo! again
Amid surrounding snows,
Within the cavern of the Witch they
stand.

Then came the weakness of her natural age

At once on Maimuna;
The burthen of her years
Fell on her, and she knew
That her repentance in the sight of God
Had now found favour, and her hour
was come.

Her death was like the righteous: 'Turn my face

To Mecca!' in her languid eyes
The joy of certain hope
Lit a last lustre, and in death
A smile was on her cheek.

3

No faithful crowded round her bier,
No tongue reported her good deeds,
For her no mourners wail'd and wept,
No Iman o'er her perfumed corpse
For her soul's health intoned the prayer;
Nor column raised by the way-side 21
Implored the passing traveller
To say a requiem for the dead.
Thalaba laid her in the snow,
And took his weapons from the hearth,
And then once more the youth began
His weary way of solitude.

4

The breath of the East is in his face,
And it drives the sleet and the snow.
The air is keen, the wind is keen, 30
His limbs are aching with the cold,
His eyes are aching with the snow,
His very heart is cold,
His spirit chill'd within him. He looks on
If aught of life be near;
But all is sky, and the white wilderness,
And here and there a solitary pine,
Its branches broken by the weight of
snow.

His pains abate, his senses, dull With suffering, cease to suffer.

Languidly, languidly,

40

Thalaba drags along,
A heavy weight is on his lids,
His limbs move slow for heaviness,
And he full fain would sleep.
Not yet, not yet, O Thalaba,
Thy hour of rest is come!
Not yet may the Destroyer sleep:
The comfortable sleep:
His journey is not over yet,
His course not yet fulfill'd!..
Run thou thy race, O Thalaba!
The prize is at the goal.

5

It was a Cedar-tree
Which woke him from that deadly
drowsiness;
Its broad round-spreading branches,

when they felt [heaven,
The snow, rose upward in a point to
And standing in their strength erect,
Defied the baffled storm.

He knew the lesson Nature gave, 60 And he shook off his heaviness, And hope revived within him.

6

Now sunk the evening sun,
A broad and beamless orb,
Adown the glowing sky;
Through the red light the snow-flakes
fell like fire.

Louder grows the biting wind,
And it drifts the dust of the snow.
The snow is clotted in his hair,
The breath of Thalaba 70
Is iced upon his lips.
He looks ground: the darkness

He looks around; the darkness,
The dizzy floating of the feathery sky
Close in his narrow view.

7

At length, through the thick atmosphere, a light

Not distant far appears. He, doubting other wiles of sorcery, With mingled joy and fear, yet quicken'd step,

Bends thitherward his way.

It was a little, lowly dwelling-place, Amid a garden whose delightful air 81 Was mild and fragrant as the evening

Passing in summer o'er the coffee-groves Of Yemen, and its blessed bowers of balm.

A fount of Fire that in the centre play'd Roll'd all around its wondrous rivulets. And fed the garden with the heat of life. Every where magic! the Arabian's heart Yearn'd after human intercourse.

A light; . . the door unclosed! . . 90 All silent . . he goes in.

There lay a Damsel, sleeping on a couch: His step awoke her, and she gazed at

With pleased and wondering look, Fearlessly, like a happy child, Too innocent to fear. With words of courtesy The young intruder spake. At the sound of his voice, a joy Kindled her bright black eyes: 100 She rose and took his hand: But at the touch the joy forsook her cheek:

'Oh! it is cold!' she cried, 'I thought I should have felt it warm, like mine.

But thou art like the rest!'

10

Thalaba stood mute awhile, And wondering at her words: 'Cold? Lady!' then he said: 'I have travell'd long In this cold wilderness. Till life is well-nigh spent!'

11

LAILA

Art thou a Man, then?

THALABA

Nay . . I did not think Sorrow and toil could so have alter'd me.

As to seem otherwise.

LATLA

And thou canst be warm Sometimes? life-warm as I am?

THALABA

Surely, Lady

As others are, I am, to heat and cold Subject like all. You see a Traveller. Bound upon hard adventure, who

requests Only to rest him here to-night, . . to-

morrow He will pursue his way.

LAILA

Oh . . not to-morrow!

Not, like a dream of joy, depart so soon! And whither wouldst thou go? for all around

Is everlasting winter, ice and snow, Deserts unpassable of endless frost.

THALABA

He who has led me here, will still sustain

Through cold and hunger.

12

'Hunger?' Laila cried: 130 She clapt her lily hands,

And whether from above, or from below.

It came, sight could not see, [food. So suddenly the floor was spread with

LAILA

Why dost thou watch with hesitating eyes fcome.

The banquet? 'tis for thee! I bade it

THALABA

Whence came it?

LATLA

Matters it from whence it came?
My Father sent it: when I call, he hears.
Nay, . . thou hast fabled with me!
and art like 140
The forms that wait upon my solitude,
Human to eye alone; . . thy hunger
would not
Question so idly else.

THALABA

I will not eat!

It came by magic! fool, to think that aught [here. But fraud and danger could await me Let loose my cloak!..

LAILA Begone then, insolent!

Why dost thou stand and gaze upon me thus?

Ay! eye the features well that threaten thee 150

With fraud and danger! in the wilderness [want,
They shall avenge me, . . in the hour of Rise on thy view, and make thee feel How innocent I am:

And this remember'd cowardice and

Than now heats mine in anger!

insult.

With a more painful shame will burn

[thy cheek,

Mark me, Lady!

Many and restless are my enemics;

My daily paths have been beset with
snares

Till I have learnt suspicion, bitter
sufferings

Teaching the needful vice. If I have
wrong'd you, . . [cence, ...

For yours should be the face of innoI pray you pardon me! In the name
of God

And of his Prophet, I partake your food.

LAILA

Lo, now! thou wert afraid of sorcery, And yet hast said a charm!

THALABA
A charm?

LAILA

And wherefore ? . .

Is it not delicate food?.. What mean thy words?

I have heard many spells, and many names,

That rule the Genii and the Elements, But never these.

THALABA

How! never heard the names Of God and of the Prophet?

LAILA

Never . . nay now!

Again that troubled eye? . . thou art
a strange man,

And wondrous fearful . . . but I must not twice [pectest still, Be charged with fraud : If thou sus-

Depart and leave me! 180

THALABA

And you do not know The God that made you?

LAILA

Made me, man!.. my Father

Made me. He made this dwelling, and
the grove, [morn
And yonder fountain-fire; and every
He visits me, and takes the snow, and
moulds [into them
Women and men,like thee; and breathes
Motion, and life, and sense, . . but, to

the touch [night closes
They are chilling cold; and ever when
They melt away again, and leave me

Alone and sad. Oh then how I rejoice When it is day, and my dear Father

comes

And cheers me with kind words and kinder looks!

My dear, dear Father!.. Were it not for him.

I am so weary of this loneliness, That I should wish I also were of snow, That I might melt away, and cease to be.

THALABA

And have you always had your dwelling here

Amid this solitude of snow?

LATLA

I think so. 200

I can remember, with unsteady feet Tottering from room to room, and finding pleasure

In flowers, and toys, and sweetmeats, things which long

Have lost their power to please; which, when I see them,

Raise only now a melancholy wish, I were the little trifler once again Who could be pleased so lightly!

THALABA

Then you know not Your Father's art?

LATE.A

No. I besought him once 210
To give me power like his, that where he went [head,
I might go with him; but he shook his
And said, it was a power too dearly bought, [tears.
And kiss'd me with the tenderness of

THALABA

And wherefore hath he hidden you thus

From all the ways of humankind?

LAILA

'Twas fear.

Fatherly fear and love. He read the stars,

And saw a danger in my destiny,

And therefore placed me here amid the snows, 220

And laid a spell that never human eye, If foot of man by chance should reach the depth

Of this wide waste, shall see one trace of grove, [fire,

Garden or dwelling-place, or yonder That thaws and mitigates the frozen sky. And, more than this, even if the Enemy Should come, I have a Guardian here.

THALABA

A Guardian?

LAILA

'Twas well, that when my sight unclosed upon thee, [face, There was no dark suspicion in thy Else I had called his succour! Wilt thou see him? 231

But, if a woman can have terrified thee, How wilt thou bear his unrelaxing brow,

And lifted lightnings?

THALABA

Lead me to him, Lady!

14

She took him by the hand, And through the porch they pass'd. Over the garden and the grove The fountain-streams of fire

Pour'd a broad light like noon: 240
A broad unnatural light,

Which made the rose's blush of beauty pale, [blaze.

And dimm'd the rich geranium's scarlet The various verdure of the grove

Wore here one undistinguishable grey, Chequer'd with blacker shade.

Suddenly Laila stopt,
'I do not think thou art the enemy,'

She said, 'but He will know!

If thou hast meditated wrong,

Stranger, depart in time...

I would not lead thee to thy death.'

She turn'd her gentle eyes

Toward him then with anxious tenderness. [Thalaba,
'So let him pierce my breast,' cried
'If it hide thought to harm you!'

LAILA

'Tis a figure,

Almost I fear to look at!.. yet come on.
'Twill ease me of a heaviness that seems
To sink my heart; and thou may'st
dwell here then 260
In safety; .. for thou shalt not go tomorrow.

Nor on the after, nor the after day,
Nor ever! It was only solitude
Which made my misery here, . .
And now, that I can see a human face,
And hear a human voice . . .
Oh no! thou wilt not leave me!

THALABA

Alas, I must not rest!

The star that ruled at my nativity,
Shone with a strange and blasting influence. 270
O gentle Lady! I should draw upon you
A killing curse!

LAILA

But I will ask my Father
To save you from all danger; and you
know not [I ask,
The wonders he can work; and when
It is not in his power to say me nay.
Perhaps thou know'st the happiness it is
To have a tender Father?

THALABA

He was one, [tainted Whom, like a loathsome leper, I have With my contagious destiny. One evening 280

He kiss'd me as he wont, and laid his hands [slept. Upon my head, and blest me ere I

His dying groan awoke me, for the Murderer

Had stolen upon our sleep!.. For me was meant

The midnight blow of death; my Father died:

The brother playmates of my infancy,
The baby at the breast, they perish'd
all... [saved

All in that dreadful hour!.. but I was To remember and revenge.

16

She answer'd not; for now, 290
Emerging from the o'er-arch'd avenue,
The finger of her upraised hand
Mark'd where the Guardian of the
garden stood.

It was a brazen Image, every limb
And swelling vein and muscle true to life:
The left knee bending on, [hand
The other straight, firm planted, and his
Lifted on high to hurl
The lightning that it grasp'd.

17

When Thalaba approach'd, 300
The enchanted Image knew Hodeirah's
son, [foe.

And hurl'd the lightning at the dreaded But from Mohareb's hand

Had Thalaba received Abdaldar's Ring.
Blindly the wicked work

The righteous will of Heaven.

Full in his face the lightning-bolt was driven;

The scatter'd fire recoil'd;
Like the flowing of a summer gale he felt
Its ineffectual force;
310

His countenance was not changed, Nor a hair of his head was singed.

18

He started, and his glance Turn'd angrily upon the Maid. The sight disarm'd suspicion; . . breathless, pale, Against a tree she stood; Her wan lips quivering, and her eyes Upraised, in silent supplicating fear.

19

Anon she started with a scream of joy,
Seeing her Father there,
320
And ran and threw her arms around his
neck. [come!
'Save me!' she cried, 'the Enemy is
Save me! save me! Okba!'

20

'Okba!' repeats the youth;
For never since that hour,
When in the tent the Spirit told his name,
Had Thalaba let slip
The memory of his Father's murderer;
'Okba!'.. and in his hand
He graspt an arrow-shaft, 330
And he rush'd on to strike him.

21

'Son of Hodeirah!' the Old Man replied,
'My hour is not yet come;'
And putting forth his hand
Gently he repell'd the Youth.
'My hour is not yet come!
But thou may'st shed this innocent
Maiden's blood;

That vengeance God allows thee!'

22

Around her Father's neck
Still Laila's hands were clasp'd; 340
Her face was turn'd to Thalaba,
A broad light floated o'er its marble
paleness,

As the wind waved the fountain fire, Her large dilated eye, in horror raised, Watch'd every look and movement of the youth:

'Not upon her,' said he,
'Not upon her, Hodeirah's blood cries
out [arm
For vengeance!' and again his lifted

Threaten'd the Sorcerer:

Again withheld, it felt 350
A barrier that no human strength could burst.

23

'Thou dost not aim the blow more eagerly,' [meet it! Okba replied, 'than I would rush to But that were poor revenge.

O Thalaba, thy God

Wreaks on the innocent head

His vengeance; . . I must suffer in my
child! [victim? Allah

Why dost thou pause to strike thy
Permits, . . commands the deed.'

24

'Liar!' quoth Thalaba. 360
And Laila's wondering eye [face.
Look'd up, all anguish, to her father's
'By Allah and the Prophet,' he replied,
'I speak the words of truth.
Misery! misery!

That I must beg mine enemy to speed The inevitable vengeance now so near! I read it in her horoscope; [race.

Her birth-star warn'd me of Hodeirah's I laid a spell, and call'd a Spirit up;

He answered, one must die, 371 Laila or Thalaba. . .

Accursed Spirit! even in truth
Giving a lying hope!

Last, I ascended the seventh Heaven,
And on the Everlasting Table there,
In characters of light,

I read her written doom.

The years that it has gnawn me! and the load

Of sin that it has laid upon my soul! 380 Curse on this hand, that in the only hour The favouring Stars allow'd,

Reek'd with other blood than thine. Still dost thou stand and gaze incredulous?

Young man, be merciful, and keep her not Longer in agony.'

Thalaba's unbelieving frown
Scowl'd on the Sorcerer, [heard,
When in the air the rush of wings was
And Azrael stood before them. 390
In equal terror at the sight,
The Enchanter, the Destroyer stood,
And Laila, the victim Maid.

26

'Son of Hodeirah!' said the Angel of
Death,
'The accursed fables not.
When from the Eternal Hand I took
The yearly scroll of Fate,
Her name was written there;...
Her leaf had wither'd on the Tree of Life.
This is the hour, and from thy hands 400
Commission'd to receive the Maid

I come.'
27

'Hear me, O Angel!' Thalaba replied;
'To avenge my father's death,
To work the will of Heaven, [race,
To root from earth the accursed sorcerer
I have dared danger undismay'd,
I have lost all my soul held dear,
I am cut off from all the ties of life,
Unmurmuring. For whate'er awaits me
still,

209

Pursuing to the end the enterprize, Peril or pain, I bear a ready heart. But strike this Maid! this innocent!.. Angel, I dare not do it.'

28

'Remember,' answer'd Azrael, 'all thou say'st [word Is written down for judgement! every In the balance of thy trial must be weigh'd!'

29

'So be it!' said the Youth:

'He who can read the secrets of the heart.

Will judge with righteousness!

This is no doubtful path; 420
The voice of God within me cannot lie...
I will not harm the innocent.'

30

He said, and from above,
As though it were the Voice of Night,
The startling answer came.
'Son of Hodeirah, think again!
One must depart from hence,
Laila, or Thalaba;
She dies for thee, or thou for her;
It must be life for life!
Son of Hodeirah, weigh it well,
While yet the choice is thine!'

31

He hesitated not,
But, looking upward, spread his hands
to Heaven,

'Oneiza, in thy bower of Paradise, Receive me, still unstain'd!'

32

'What!' exclaim'd Okba, 'darest thou disobey, Abandoning all claim To Allah's longer aid?'

33

The eager exultation of his speech Earthward recall'd the thoughts of Thalaba.

'And dost thou triumph, Murderer?
dost thou deem

Because I perish, that the unsleeping lids Of Justice shall be closed upon thy crime?

Poor, miserable man! that thou canst live

With such beast-blindness in the present joy, [God

When o'er thy head the sword of Hangs for the certain stroke!'

34

'Servant of Allah, thou hast disobey'd;
God hath abandon'd thee;
This hour is mine!' cried Okba,
And shook his daughter off,
And drew the dagger from his vest,
And aim'd the deadly blow.

35

All was accomplish'd. Laila rush'd between

To save the saviour Youth.

She met the blow, and sunk into his arms,

And Azrael, from the hands of Thalaba, Received her parting soul.

THE ELEVENTH BOOK

Those, Sir, that traffic in these seas, Fraught not their bark with fears. SIR ROBERT HOWARD.

1

O FOOL, to think thy human hand Could check the chariot-wheels of Destiny!

To dream of weakness in the all-knowing Mind,

That its decrees should change!
To hope that the united Powers
Of Earth, and Air, and Hell,

Might blot one letter from the Book of Fate, [chain!

Might break one link of the eternal Thou miserable, wicked, poor old man! Fall now upon the body of thy child, to Beat now thy breast, and pluck the bleeding hairs

From thy grey beard, and lay Thine ineffectual hand to close her wound,

> And call on Hell to aid, And call on Heaven to send Its merciful thunderbolt!

2

The young Arabian silently Beheld his frantic grief.

The presence of the hated youth
To raging anguish stung
The wretched Sorcerer.

'Ay! look and triumph!' he exclaim'd:
'This is the justice of thy God!

A righteous God is he, to let His vengeance fall upon the innocent head!...

Curse thee, curse thee, Thalaba!'

3

All feelings of revenge
Had left Hodeirah's son.
Pitying and silently he heard
The victim of his own iniquities; 30
Not with the officious hand
Of consolation, fretting the sore wound
He could not hope to heal.

4

So as the Servant of the Prophet stood, With sudden motion the night-air Gently fann'd his cheek.

'Twas a Green Bird, whose wings
Had waved the quiet air.
On the hand of Thalaba

The Green Bird perch'd, and turn'd 40
A mild eye up, as if to win

The Adventurer's confidence;
Then, springing on, flew forward;
And now again returns

To court him to the way; And now his hand perceives Her rosy feet press firmer, as she leaps

ler rosy feet press firmer, as she lea Upon the wing again.

5

Obedient to the call,
By the pale moonlight Thalaba pursued,
O'er trackless snows, his way; 51
Unknowing he what blessed messenger
Had come to guide his steps,...

That Laila's spirit went before his path.

Brought up in darkness, and the child of sin,
Yet, as the meed of spotless innocence,
Just Heaven permitted her by one good deed [death;
To work her own redemption after
So, till the Judgement day,
She might abide in bliss, 60
Green warbler of the Bowers of Paradisc.

6

The morning sun came forth,

Wakening no eye to life

In this wide solitude;

His radiance, with a saffron hue, like

heat,

Suffused the desert snow. The Green Bird guided Thalaba; Now oaring with slow wing her upward

Descending now in slant descent
On out-spread pinions motionless; 70
Floating now, with rise and fall alternate,
As if the billows of the air
Heaved her with their sink and swell.
And when beneath the moon
The icy glitter of the snow
Dazzled his aching sight,
Then on his arm alighted the Green Bird,
And spread before his eyes
Her plumage of refreshing hue.

7

Evening came on; the glowing clouds Tinged with a purple ray the mountain ridge 81 That lay before the Traveller.

Ah! whither art thou gone,
Guide and companion of the youth,
whose eye

Has lost thee in the depth of Heaven?
Why hast thou left alone
The weary wanderer in the wilderness?
And now the western clouds grow pale,
And night descends upon his solitude.

8

The Arabian youth knelt down, 90
And bow'd his forehead to the ground,
And made his evening prayer.
When he arose the stars were bright in

When he arose the stars were bright in heaven,

The sky was blue, and the cold Moon Shone over the cold snow. A speck in the air!

Is it his guide that approaches?
For it moves with the motion of life!
Lo! she returns, and scatters from her
pinions [morning

Odours diviner than the gales of Waft from Sabea.

a

Hovering before the youth she hung,
Till from her rosy feet, that at his touch
Uncurl'd their grasp, he took
The fruitful bough they bore.
He took and tasted: a new life
Flow'd through his renovated frame;
His limbs, that late were sore and stiff,

Felt all the freshness of repose;

His dizzy brain was calm'd, 110
The heavy aching of his lids was gone;
For Laila, from the Bowers of Paradise,
Had borne the healing fruit.

10

So up the mountain steep,
With untired foot he pass'd,
The Green Bird guiding him,
Mid crags, and ice, and rocks,
A difficult way, winding the long ascent.

A difficult way, winding the long ascent. How then the heart of Thalaba rejoiced, When, bosom'd in the mountain depths, A shelter'd Valley open'd on his view!

It was the Simorg's vale, 12: The dwelling of the Ancient Bird.

11

On a green and mossy bank,

Beside a rivulet,

The Bird of Ages stood.

No sound intruded on his solitude, Only the rivulet was heard, Whose everlasting flow. From the birth-day of the world, had made 130 The same unvaried murmuring. Here dwelt the all-knowing Bird In deep tranquillity, His eye-lids ever closed

In full enjoyment of profound repose.

Reverently the youth approach'd That old and only Bird, And crost his arms upon his breast, And bow'd his head and spake. 'Earliest of existing things, 140 Earliest thou, and wisest thou, Guide me, guide me, on my way! I am bound to seek the Caverns Underneath the roots of Ocean. Where the Sorcerers have their seat; Thou the eldest, thou the wisest, Guide me, guide me, on my way!'

13

The ancient Simorg on the youth Unclosed his thoughtful eyes, And answer'd to his prayer. 150 'Northward by the stream proceed; In the Fountain of the Rock Wash away thy worldly stains Kneel thou there, and seek the Lord, And fortify thy soul with prayer. Thus prepared, ascend the Sledge; Be bold, be wary; seek and find! God hath appointed all.' The Ancient Simorg then let fall his lids, Relapsing to repose. 160

14

Northward, along the rivulet. The adventurer went his way; Tracing its waters upward to their source.

Green Bird of Paradisc.

Thou hast not left the youth ! . . With slow associate flight, She companies his way; And now they reach the Fountain of the Rock.

15

There, in the cold clear well, Thalaba wash'd away his earthly stains, And bow'd his face before the Lord. And fortified his soul with prayer. The while, upon the rock, Stood the celestial Bird, [pass,

And pondering all the perils he must With a mild, melancholy eye, Beheld the youth beloved.

And lo! beneath you lonely pine, the Sledge:..

There stand the harness'd Dogs. Their wide eyes watching for the youth, Their ears erect, and turn'd toward his wav.

They were lean as lean might be, Their furrow'd ribs rose prominent, And they were black from head to foot, Save a white line on every breast, Curved like the crescent moon. Thalaba takes his seat in the sledge: His arms are folded on his breast, The Bird is on his knees:

There is fear in the eyes of the Dogs, 190 There is fear in their pitiful moan. And now they turn their heads, And seeing him seated, away!

The youth, with the start of their speed, Falls back to the bar of the sledge; His hair floats straight in the stream of the wind

Like the weeds in the running brook. They wind with speed their upward way, An icy path through rocks of ice: His eye is at the summit now, 200 And thus far all is dangerless;
And now upon the height
The black Dogs pause and pant;
They turn their eyes to Thalaba
As if to plead for pity;
They moan and whine with fear.

18

Once more away! and now
The long descent is seen,
A long, long, narrow path;
Ice-rocks aright, and hills of snow,
Aleft the precipice.
Be tirm, be firm, O Thalaba!
One motion now, one bend,
And on the crags below
Thy shatter'd flesh will harden in the
frost.

Why howl the Dogs so mournfully?
And wherefore does the blood flow fast
All purple o'er their sable skin?
His arms are folded on his breast,
Nor scourge nor goad hath he, 220
No hand appears to strike,
No sounding lash is heard;
But piteously they moan and whine,
And track their way with blood.

19

Behold! on yonder height A giant Fiend aloft Waits to thrust down the tottering avalanche! If Thalaba looks back, he dies; The motion of fear is death. On . . on . . with swift and steady pace, Adown that dreadful way! The Youth is firm, the Dogs are fleet, The Sledge goes rapidly: The thunder of the avalanche Re-echoes far behind. On . . on . . with swift and steady pace, Adown that dreadful way! The Dogs are fleet, the way is steep. The Sledge goes rapidly;

They reach the plain below.

20

A wide, blank plain, all desolate. Nor tree, nor bush, nor herb! On go the Dogs with rapid course, The Sledge slides after rapidly, And now the sun went down. They stopt and look'd at Thalaba, The Youth perform'd his prayer! They knelt beside him while he pray'd, They turn'd their heads to Mecca. And tears ran down their cheeks. 250 Then down they laid them in the snow, As close as they could lie, They laid them down and slept. And backward in the sledge. The Adventurer laid himself: There peacefully slept Thalaba, And the Green Bird of Paradise Lay nestling in his breast.

21

The Dogs awoke him at the dawn,
They knelt and wept again; 260
Then rapidly they journey'd on,
And still the plain was desolate,
Nor tree, nor bush, nor herb!
And ever at the hour of prayer,
They stopt, and knelt, and wept;
And still that green and graceful Bird
Was as a friend to him by day,
And, ever when at night he slept,
Lay nestling in his breast.

22

In that most utter solitude
It cheer'd his heart to hear
Her soft and soothing voice.
Her voice was soft and sweet,
It rose not with the blackbird's thrill,
Nor warbled like that dearest bird that
holds

The solitary man

A loiterer in his thoughtful walk at eve;
But if it swell'd with no exuberant joy,
It had a tone that touch'd a finer string,

A music that the soul received and own'd. 280

Her bill was not the beak of blood;
There was a human meaning in her eye
When fix'd on Thalaba,
He wonder'd while he gazed,
And with mysterious love
Felt his heart drawn in powerful sympathy.

23

Oh joy! the signs of life appear, The first and single Fir That on the limits of the living world Strikes in the ice its roots. 200 Another, and another now; And now the Larch, that flings its Down-curving like the falling wave; And now the Aspin's scatter'd leaves Grey-glittering on the moveless twig; The Poplar's varying verdure now. And now the Birch so beautiful Light as a lady's plumes. Oh joy! the signs of life! the Deer Hath left his slot beside the way: 300 The little Ermine now is seen. White wanderer of the snow: And now from yonder pines they hear The clatter of the Grouse's wings: And now the snowy Owl pursues The Traveller's sledge, in hope of food; And hark! the rosy-breasted bird, The Throstle of sweet song! Joy! joy! the winter-wilds are left!

And here the lovely flowers!

Green bushes now, and greener grass,

Red thickets here, all berry-bright, 311

When the last morning of their way was come,

After the early prayer,

The Green Bird fix'd on Thalaba
A sad and supplicating eye,

And speech was given her then:
'Servant of God, I leave thee now;
If rightly I have guided thee,
Give me the boon I beg!' 320

25

'O gentle Bird!' quoth Thalaba,
'Guide and companion of my dangerous

Friend and sole solace of my solitude, How can I pay thee benefits like these? Ask what thou wilt that I can give, O gentle Bird, the poor return Will leave me debtor still!

26

'Son of Hodeirah!' she replied,
'When thou shalt see an Old Man bent
beneath

The burthen of his earthly punishment, Forgive him, Thalaba! 33x Yea, send a prayer to God in his behalf!'

97

A flush o'erspread the young Destroyer's cheek;

He turn'd his eye towards the Bird As if in half repentance; for he thought Of Okba; and his Father's dying groan Came on his memory. The celestial Bird

Saw and renew'd her speech;
'O'Thalaba, if she who in thine arms
Received the dagger-blow and died for
thee 34

Deserve one kind remembrance, . . save,
O save [less death!'
The Father that she loves from end-

 28

'Laila! and is it thou?' the youth replied, [thee?' What is there that I durst refuse to This is no time to harbour in my heart One evil thought;..here I put off revenge,

The last rebellious feeling. . . Be it so!
God grant to me the pardon that I need,
As I do pardon him!..

But who am I, that I should save 350 The sinful soul alive?'

29

'Enough!' said Laila. 'When the hour shall come, Remember me! my task is done. We meet again in Paradise!' She said, and shook her wings, and up she soar'd With arrowy swiftness through the

heights of Heaven.

His aching eye pursued her path, When starting onward went the Dogs; More rapidly they hurried now, In hope of near repose. 360 It was the early morning yet, When, by the well-head of a brook They stopt, their journey done. The spring was clear, the water deep; A venturous man were he, and rash, That should have probed its depths, For all its loosen'd bed below, Heaved strangely up and down, And to and fro, from side to side. It heaved, and waved, and toss'd, 370 And yet the depths were clear, And yet no ripple wrinkled o'er The face of that fair Well.

31

And on that Well, so strange and fair,
A little boat there lay,
Without an oar, without a sail,
One only seat it had, one seat,
As if for only Thalaba.
And at the helm a Damsel stood,
A Damsel bright and bold of eye, 380
Yet did a maiden modesty
Adorn her fearless brow;

Her face was sorrowful, but sure
More beautiful for sorrow.
To her the Dogs look'd wistful up,
And then their tongues were loosed:
'Have we done well, O Mistress dear!
And shall our sufferings end?'

32

The gentle Damsel made reply; 389
'Poor servants of the God 1 serve,
When all this witchery is destroy'd,
Your woes will end with mine.
A hope, alas! how long unknown!
This new adventurer gives;
Now God forbid, that he, like you,
Should perish for his fears!
Poor servants of the God I serve,
Wait ye the event in peace.'
does and total slumber as she spake

A deep and total slumber as she spake Seized them. Sleep on, poor sufferers! be at rest! 400

Ye wake no more to anguish:..ye have borne

The Chosen, the Destroyer!..soon his hand

Shall strike the efficient blow; And shaking off your penal forms, shall ye,

With songs of joy, amid the Eden groves, Hymn the Deliverer's praise.

33
Then did the Damsel say to Thalaba,

'The morn is young, the Sun is fair,
And pleasantly through pleasant banks
You quiet stream flows on . . 410
Wilt thou embark with me?
Thou knowest not the water's way;
Think, Stranger, well! and night must
come. . .

Darest thou embark with me?
Through fearful perils thou must pass, . .
Stranger, the wretched ask thine aid!
Thou wilt embark with me!

She smiled in tears upon the youth;...

What heart were his, who could gainsay
That melancholy smile?
'I will,' quoth Thalaba,
'I will, in Allah's name!'

34

He sate him on the single scat, The little boat moved on. Through pleasant banks the quiet stream Went winding pleasantly; By fragrant fir-groves now it pass'd, And now, through alder-shores, Through green and fertile meadows now It silently ran by. 430 The flag-flower blossom'd on its side, The willow tresses waved, The flowing current furrow'd round The water-lily's floating leaf, The fly of green and gauzy wing, Fell sporting down its course; And grateful to the voyager The freshness that it breathed. And soothing to his ear Its murmur round the prow. 440 The little boat falls rapidly Adown the rapid stream.

35

But many a silent spring meantime, And many a rivulet and rill Had swoln the growing stream; And when the southern Sun began To wind the downward way of heaven, It ran a river deep and wide. Through banks that widen'd still. Then once again the Damsel spake: 450 'The stream is strong, the river broad, Wilt thou go on with me? The day is fair, but night must come . . Wilt thou go on with me? Far, far away, the sufferer's eye For thee hath long been looking, ... Thou wilt go on with me!' 'Sail on, sail on,' quoth Thalaba, 'Sail on, in Allah's name!'

The little boat falls rapidly 460 Adown the river-stream.

36

A broader and yet broader stream, That rock'd the little boat! The Cormorant stands upon its shoals, His black and dripping wings Half open'd to the wind. The Sun goes down, the crescent Moon Is brightening in the firmament; And what is yonder roar, That sinking now, and swelling now, But evermore increasing, 47I Still louder, louder, grows? The little boat falls rapidly Adown the rapid tide; The Moon is bright above, And the great Ocean opens on their way.

37

Then did the Damsel speak again,
'Wilt thou go on with me?
The Moon is bright, the sea is calm,
I know the ocean-paths;
Wilt thou go on with me?..
Deliverer! yes! thou dost not fear!
Thou wilt go on with me!'
'Sail on, sail on!' quoth Thalaba,
'Sail on, in Allah's name!'

38

The Moon is bright, the sca is calm,
The little boat rides rapidly
Across the ocean waves;
The line of moonlight on the deep
Still follows as they voyage on; 490
The winds are motionless;
The gentle waters gently part
In dimples round the prow.
He looks above, he looks around,
The boundless heaven, the boundless

The crescent moon, the little boat, Nought else above, below.

The Moon is sunk; a dusky grey
Spreads o'er the Eastern sky;
The stars grow pale and paler;..500
Oh beautiful! the godlike Sun
Is rising o'er the sea!
Without an oar, without a sail,
The little boat rides rapidly;..
Is that a cloud that skirts the sea?
There is no cloud in heaven!
And nearer now, and darker now..
It is..it is..the Land!
For yonder are the rocks that rise
Dark in the reddening morn; 510
For loud around their hollow base
The surges rage and foam.

40

The little boat rides rapidly,
And pitches now with shorter toss
Upon the narrower swell;
And now so near, they see
The shelves and shadows of the cliff,
And the low-lurking rocks,
O'er whose black summits, hidden half,
The shivering billows burst;... 520
And nearer now they feel the breaker's
spray.
Then said the Damsel: 'Yonder is our

path
Beneath the cavern arch.
Now is the cbb, and till the ocean
flow

We cannot over-ride the rocks.

Go thou, and on the shore
Perform thy last ablutions, and with
prayer

Strengthen thy heart.. I too have need to pray.'

41

She held the helm with steady hand
Amid the stronger waves; 530
Through surge and surf she drove;
The adventurer leapt to land.

THE TWELFTH BOOK

Why should he that loves me sorry be For my deliverance, or at all complain My good to hear, and toward joys to see? I go, and long desired have to go, I go with gladness to my wished rest.

SPENSER, Daphnaida.

1

THEN Thalaba drew off Abdaldar's ring, And cast it in the sea, and cried aloud, 'Thou art my shield, my trust, my hope, O God!

Behold and guard me now,
Thou who alone canst save.

If from mychildhood up I have look'd on
With exultation to my destiny;

If in the hour of anguish I have own'd
The justice of the hand that chasten'd

If of all selfish passions purified to I go to work thy will, and from the world Root up the ill-doing race, [arm Lord! let not thou the weakness of my Make vain the enterprize!'

2

The Sun was rising all magnificent,
Occanand Heaven rejoicing in his beams.

And now had Thalaba [stood
Perform'd his last ablutions, and he
And gazed upon the little boat
Riding the billows near, 20
Where, like a sea-bird breasting the

broad waves,

It rose and fell upon the surge,
Till from the glitterance of the sunny
main

He turn'd his aching eyes;
And then upon the beach he laid him
down,

And watch'd the rising tide.

He did not pray, he was not calm for
prayer; [hope,
His spirit, troubled with tumultuous

Toil'd with futurity; 29
His brain, with busier workings, felt
The roar and raving of the restless sea,
The boundless waves that rose and
roll'd and rock'd:

The everlasting sound
Opprest him, and the heaving infinite:
He closed his lids for rest.

3

Meantime with fuller reach and stronger swell.

Wave after wave advanced;
Each following billow lifted the last
foam [hues;
That trembled on the sand with rainbow
The living flower that, rooted to the

rock,

Late from the thinner element Shrunk down within its purple stem to sleep,

> Now feels the water, and again Awakening, blossoms out All its green anther-necks.

> > 4

Was there a Spirit in the gale
That fluttered o'er his cheek?

For it came on him like the new-risen
sun [closed flower,
Which plays and dallies o'er the nightAnd woos it to unfold anew to joy; 50

For it came on him as the dews of eve
Descend with healing and with life
Upon the summer mead;
Or liker the first sound of seraph song
And Angel greeting, to the soul
Whose latest sense had shudder'd at the
groan
Of anguish, kneeling by a death-bed side.

5

He starts, and gazes round to seek
The certain presence. 'Thalaba!'
exclaim'd

The Voice of the Unseen:..

'Father of my Oneiza!' he replied,
'And have thy years been number'd?
art thou too

Among the Angels?'.. 'Thalaba!' A second and a dearer voice repeats, 'Go in the favour of the Lord,

My Thalaba, go on! [bliss.

My husband, I have drest our bower of
Go, and perform the work;

Let me not longer suffer hope in Heaven!'

в

He turn'd an eager glance toward the sea. 70

'Come!' quoth the Damsel, and she drove

Her little boat to land.

Impatient through the rising wave,
He rush'd to meet its way,

His eye was bright, his cheek was flush'd with joy. [she ask'd.

'Hast thou had comfort in thy prayers?'
'Yea,' Thalaba replied,

'A heavenly visitation.' 'God be praised!' [vain!' She answer'd, 'then I do not hope in And her voice trembled, and her lip Quiver'd, and tears ran down. 81

7

'Stranger,' said she, 'in years long past
Was one who vow'd himself
The Champion of the Lord, like thee,
Against the race of Hell.

Young was he, as thyself, Gentle, and yet so brave!

A lion-hearted man. [love Shame on me, Stranger! in the arms of I held him from his calling, till the hour Was past; and then the Angel who should else

Have crown'd him with his glory-wreath, Smote him in anger.. Years and years are gone..

60 And in his place of penance he awaits

Thee, the Deliverer, . . surely thou art he!

It was my rightcous punishment,
In the same youth unchanged,
And love unchangeable,
Sorrow for ever fresh,
And bitter penitence,

That gives no respite night nor day from grief,

To abide the written hour, when I should waft [here.

The doom'd Destroyer and Deliverer Remember thou, that thy success affects No single fate, no ordinary wees.'

8

As thus she spake, the entrance of the cave

Darken'd the boat below.

Around them from their nests.

The screaming sea-birds fled,
Wondering at that strange shape, 110
Yet unalarm'd at sight of living man,
Unknowing of his sway and power misused:

The clamours of their young
Echoed in shriller cries,
Which rung in wild discordance round
the rock.

And farther as they now advanced,
The dim reflection of the darken'd day
Grew fainter, and the dash [yet,
Of the out-breakers deaden'd; farther
And yet more faint the gleam, 120
And there the waters, at their utmost
bound,

Silently rippled on the rising rock.

They landed and advanced, and deeper

Two adamantine doors Closed up the cavern pass.

Ω

Reclining on the rock beside, Sate a grey-headed man, Watching an hour-glass by. To him the Damsel spake,
'Is it the hour appointed?' The Old
Man 130

Nor answer'd her awhile,
Nor lifted he his downward eye,
For now the glass ran low,
And, like the days of age,
With speed perceivable,
The latter sands descend;
And now the last are gone.
Then he look'd up, and raised his hand,

and smote
The adamantine gates.

10

The gates of adamant 140
Unfolding at the stroke,
Open'd and gave the entrance. Then she
turn'd

To Thalaba and said,
'Go, in the name of God!
I cannot enter, . . I must wait the end
In hope and agony.
God and Mahommed prosper thee,
For thy sake and for ours!'

11

He tarried not, . . he pass'd 149
The threshold, over which was no return.
All earthly thoughts, all human hopes
And passions now put off,
He cast no backward glance

Toward the gleam of day.

There was a light within, [Sun,
A yellow light, as when the autumnal
Through travelling rain and mist
Shines on the evening hills:
Whether, from central fires effused,
Or that the sun-beams, day by day,

From earliest generations, there absorb'd, 161.
Were gathering for the wrath-flame. Shade

Were gathering for the wrath-flame. Shade was none

In those portentous vaults; Crag overhanging, nor columnal rock Cast its dark outline there; For with the hot and heavy atmosphere Sprung from one stem that branch'd The light incorporate, permeating all. Spread over all its equal vellowness. There was no motion in the lifeless air; He felt no stirring as he pass'd 170 Adown the long descent; He heard not his own footsteps on the rock Ino sound. That through the thick stagnation sent How sweet it were, he thought, To feel the flowing wind! With what a thirst of joy He should breathe in the open gales of heaven!

12 Downward, and downward still, and still the way, The lengthening way is safe. Is there no secret wile, 180 No lurking enemy? His watchful eye is on the wall of rock... And warily he marks the roof, And warily surveys The path that lies before. Downward, and downward still, and still the way, The long, long way is safe; Rock only, the same light, The same dead atmosphere, And solitude, and silence like the grave.

13

At length the long descent 191 Ends on a precipice: No feeble ray enter'd its dreadful gulph: For in the pit profound, Black Darkness, utter Night, Repell'd the hostile gleam, And o'er the surface the light atmosphere Floated, and mingled not. [wings, Above the depth, four over-awning Unplumed and huge and strong, 200 Bore up a little car; Four living pinions, headless, bodiless,

below

In four down-arching limbs, And clench'd the car-rings endlong and athwart

With claws of griffin grasp.

14

But not on these, the depth so terrible The wondrous wings, fix'd Thalaba his eve:

For there, upon the brink, With fiery fetters fasten'd to the rock, A man, a living man, tormented lay, The young Othatha; in the arms of love He who had linger'd out the auspicious hour.

Forgetful of his call. In shuddering pity, Thalaba exclaim'd. 'Servant of God, can I not succour thee?' He groan'd, and answer'd, 'Son of Man, I sinn'd, and am tormented: I endure In patience and in hope. [Hell. The hour that shall destroy the Race of That hour shall set me free.'

15

'Is it not come?' quoth Thalaba, 'Yea! by this omen!' . . and with fearless hand Iname He grasp'd the burning fetters, 'in the Of God!' . . and from the rock Rooted the rivets, and adown the gulph Dropt them. The rush of flames roar'd For they had kindled in their fall

The deadly vapours of the pit profound, And Thalaba bent on and look'd below. But vainly he explored 231 The deep abyss of flame, feve. That sunk beyond the plunge of mortal Now all ablaze, as if infernal fires Illumed the world beneath. Soon was the poison-fuel spent, The flame grew pale and dim

And dimmer now it fades, and now is Was then the Simorg with the Powers quench'd,

And all again is dark, Save where the yellow air Enters a little in, and mingles slow.

16

Meantime, the freed Othatha claspt his knees.

And cried, 'Deliverer!' struggling then With joyful hope, 'and where is she,' he cried.

'Whose promised coming for so many a year . . .'

'Go!' answered Thalaba, 'She waits thee at the gates.' 'And in thy triumph,' he replied, 'There thou wilt join us?' . . The Deliverer's eye Glanced on the abyss, way else was

The depth was unascendable. 'Await not me,' he cried, 'My path hath been appointed! go . . embark!

none . .

Return to life, . . live happy!'

OTHATHA

But thy name?.. [it, . . That through the nations we may blazon That we may bless thee!

> THALABA Bless the Merciful!

> > 17

Then Thalaba pronounced the name of God.

And leapt into the car. 260 Down, down, it sunk, .. down, down, . . He neither breathes nor sees; His eyes are closed for giddiness, His breath is sinking with the fall. The air that yields beneath the car, Inflates the wings above.

Down . . down . . a measureless depth ! . . down . . down,

of ill

Associate to destroy? And was that lovely Mariner 270 A fiend as false as fair ? For still the car sinks down: But ever the uprushing wind Inflates the wings above, And still the struggling wings Repel the rushing wind. Down . . down . . and now it strikes.

18

He stands and totters giddily, All objects round awhile Float dizzy on his sight; Collected soon, he gazes for the way. There was a distant light that led his search:

The unpruned taper flares a longer flame, But this was strong as is the noontide sun, So, in the glory of its rays intense, It quiver'd with green glow. Beyond was all unseen, No eye could penetrate That unendurable excess of light. 290

The torch a broader blaze.

It veil'd no friendly form, thought Thalaba:

And wisely did he deem, For at the threshold of the rocky door, Hugest and fiercest of his kind accurst,

Fit warden of the sorcery-gate,

A rebel Afreet lay; He scented the approach of human food, And hungry hope kindled his eye of

Raising his hand to screen the dazzled Onward held Thalaba. And lifted still at times a rapid glance; Till the due distance gain'd,

With head abased, he laid An arrow in its rest.

With steady effort and knit forehead then,

Full on the painful light

He fix'd his aching eye, and loosed
the bow.

20

A hideous yell ensued;
And sure no human voice had scope or
power

For that prodigious shriek 310 Whose pealing echoes thundered up the rock.

Dim grew the dying light;
But Thalaba leapt onward to the doors
Now visible beyond,

And while the Afreet warden of the way
Was writhing with his death-pangs,
over him

Sprung and smote the stony doors, And bade them, in the name of God, give way!

21

The dying Fiend beneath him, at that name

Tost in worse agony, 320
And the rocks shudder'd, and the rocky
doors

Rent at the voice asunder. Lo! within..

The Teraph and the Fire,

And Khawla, and in mail complete Mohareb for the strife.

But Thalaba, with numbing force, Smites his raised arm, and rushes by; For now he sees the fire, amid whose flames,

On the white ashes of Hodeirah, lies
Hodeirah's holy sword.
330

22

He rushes to the Fire:
Then Khawla met the youth,
And leapt upon him, and with clinging
arms [aim
Clasps him, and calls Mohareb now to

The effectual vengeance. O fool! fool! he sees

His Father's Sword, and who shall bar his way?

Who stand against the fury of that arm
That spurns her to the ground?..
She rises half, she twists around his
knees,..

A moment . . and he vainly strives

To shake her from her hold; 341

Impatient then he seized her leathery
neck

With throttling grasp, and as she loosed her hold,

Thrust her aside, and unimpeded now Springs forward to the Sword.

23

The co-existent Flame
Knew the Destroyer; it encircled him.
Roll'd up his robe, and gather'd round
his head:

Condensing to intenser splendour there, His Crown of Glory and his Light of Life, Hover'd the irradiate wreath. 351

24

The instant Thalaba had laid his hand Upon his Father's Sword,

The Living Image in the inner cave Smote the Round Altar. The Domdaniel rock'd

Through all its thundering vaults;
Over the Surface of the reeling Earth,
The alarum shock was felt;

The Sorcerer brood, all, all, where'er dispersed,

Perforce obey'd the summons; all, . . they came 360

Compell'd by Hell and Heaven;
By Hell compell'd to keep
Their baptism-covenant,

And with the union of their strength Oppose the common danger; forced by Heaven

To share the common doom.

Vain are all spells! the Destroyer
Treads the Domdaniel floor.
They crowd with human arms and
human force
To crush the single foe. 370
Vain is all human force!
He wields his Father's Sword,
The vengeance of awaken'd Deity.
But chief on Thalaba Mohareb prest;
The Witch in her oracular speech
Announced one fatal blow for both,
And, desperate of self-safety, yet he hoped
To serve the cause of Eblis, and uphold
His empire, true in death.

26

Who shall withstand the Destroyer? 380 Scatter'd before the sword of Thalaba
The Sorcerer throng recede,
And leave him space for combat. Wretched man, . [avail
What shall the helmet or the shield
Against Almighty anger? . . Wretched man, [chosen
Too late Mohareb finds that he hath
The evil part! . . He rears his shield
To meet the Arabian's sword, . .
Under the edge of that fire-hardened steel,

The shield falls sever'd; his cold arm
Rings with the jarring blow:.. 391
He lifts his soymetar;
A second stroke, and lo! the broken hilt
Hangs from his palsied hand:
And now he bleeds, and now he flies,
And fain would hide himself amid the

troop;
But they feel the sword of Hodeirah,
But they also fly from the ruin,
And hasten to the inner cave,
And fall all fearfully
400
Around the Giant Idol's feet,
Seeking protection from the Power they

served.

27

It was a Living Image, by the art Of magic hands, of flesh and bones composed,

And human blood, through veins and arteries

That flow'd with vital action. In the shape

Of Eblis it was made;

Its stature such, and such its strength,
As when among the sons of God 409
Pre-eminent he raised his radiant head,
Prince of the Morning. On his brow

A coronet of meteor flames,
Flowing in points of light.
Self-poised in air before him
Hung the Round Altar, rolling like the
World

On its diurnal axis, like the World
Chequer'd with sea and shore,
The work of Demon art.
For where the sceptre in the Idol's
hand

Touch'd the Round Altar, in its answering realm, 420

Earth felt the stroke, and Ocean rose in storms,

And shatter'd Cities, shaken from their seat,

Crush'd all their habitants. His other arm was raised, and its spread palm

Sustain'd the ocean-weight,
Whose naked waters arch'd the sanctuary;

Sole prop and pillar he.

28

Fallen on the ground, around his feet, The Sorcerers lay. Mohareb's quivering arms

Clung to the Idol's knees; 430
The Idol's face was pale,
And calm in terror he beheld
The approach of the Destroyer.

29	
Sure of his stroke, and therefore	in pur-
suit	[foe,
Following, nor blind, nor hasty,	on his
Moved the Destroyer. Okba met h	is way,

Of all that brotherhood

He only fearless, miscrable man,

The one that had no hope.
'On me, on me,' the childless Sorcerer

cried, 440

'Let fall the weapon! I am he who stole
Upon the midnight of thy Father's
tent:

This is the hand that pierced Hodeirah's heart, [blood

That felt thy brethren's and thy sisters'
Gush round the dagger-hilt. Let fall
on me

The fated sword! the vengeance-hour is come!

Destroyer, do thy work!'

30

Nor wile, nor weapon, had the desperate wretch;

He spread his bosom to the stroke.

'Old Man, I strike thee not!' said
Thalaba;

45

'The evil thou hast done to me and

Brought its own bitter punishment.
For thy dear Daughter's sake I pardon
thee,

As I do hope Heaven's pardon . . For her sake

Repent while time is yet!.. thou hast my prayers

To aid thee; thou poor sinner, cast thyself

Upon the goodness of offended God!

I speak in Laila's name; and what if
now

Thou canst not think to join in Paradise Her spotless Spirit, . . hath not Allah made 460 Al-Araf, in his wisdom? where the sight Of Heaven may kindle in the penitent The strong and purifying fire of hope, Till, at the Day of Judgement, he shall see

The Mercy-Gates unfold.'

31

The astonish'd man stood gazing as he spake, [tears

At length his heart was soften'd, and the Gush'd, and he sobb'd aloud.

Then suddenly was heard
The all-beholding Prophet's voice divine,
'Thou hast done well, my Servant! 471
Ask and receive thy reward!

32

A deep and aweful joy Seem'd to dilate the heart of Thalaba; With arms in reverence cross'd upon his breast,

Upseeking eyes suffused with tears devout,

He answered to the Voice, 'Prophet of God,

Holy, and good, and bountiful!
One only earthly wish have I, to work
Thy will; and thy protection grants me
that.

480

Look on this Sorcerer! heavy are his crimes,

But infinite is mercy! if thy servant Have now found favour in the sight of God, [save

Let him be touch'd with penitence, and His soul from utter death.'

33

'The groans of penitence,' replied the Voice,

'Never arise unheard!
But, for thyself, prefer the prayer;
The Treasure-house of Heaven
Is open to thy will.'
490

'Prophet of God!' then answered Thalaba,

'I am alone on earth;

Thou knowest the secret wishes of my heart!

Do with me as thou wilt! thy will is best.

35

There issued forth no Voice to answer him:

But, lo! Hodeirah's Spirit comes to His vengeance, and beside him, a pure form

'My Child, my dear, my glorious . . blessed . . Child.

My promise is perform'd . . fulfil thy work! 500

36

Thalaba knew that his death-hour was come:

And on he leapt, and springing up, Into the Idol's heart Hilt deep he plunged the Sword. The Ocean-vault fell in, and all were crush'd.

In the same moment, at the gate Of Paradise, Oneiza's Houri form Of roseate light, his Angel mother hung. Welcomed her Husband to eternal bliss. With one long thunder-peal the ear assailing;

Ten thousand voices then join in,
And with one deep and general din
Pour their wild wailing.

The song of praise is drown'd
Amid the deafening sound;
You hear no more the trumpet's tone,
You hear no more the mourner's moan,
Though the trumpet's breath, and the
dirge of death,

Swell with commingled force the funeral yell.

But rising over all in one acclaim
Is heard the echoed and re-echoed name,
From all that countless rout:

Arvalan! Arvalan! Arvalan! Arvalan!

Ten times ten thousand voices in one shout

Call Arvalan! The overpowering sound,
From house to house repeated rings
about.

From tower to tower rolls round.

4

The death-procession moves along; e Their bald heads shining to the torches' li: 51 fic The Bramins lead the way, an Chaunting the funeral song. upc And now at once they shout. per Arvalan! Arvalan! With quick rebound of sound, All in accordance cry. Arvalan! Arvalan! The universal multitude reply. In vain ye thunder on his ear the name; Would ye awake the dead? Borne upright in his palankeen, There Arvalan is seen! A glow is on his face, . . a lively red; It is the crimson canopy Which o'er his cheek a reddening shade hath shed;

He moves, . . he nods his head, . . But the motion comes from the bearers' tread,

As the body, borne aloft in state, Sways with the impulse of its own dead weight.

- 5

Close following his dead son, Kehama came.

Nor joining in the ritual song,
Nor calling the dear name;
With head deprest and funeral vest,
And arms enfolded on his breast,
Silent and lost in thought he moves along.

Silent and lost in thought he moves along. King of the World, his slaves, unenvying now, [they see

Behold their wretched Lord; rejoiced The mighty Rajah's misery;

That Nature in his pride hath dealt the blow, 80

And taught the Master of Mankind to know

Even he himself is man, and not exempt from woe.

6

O sight of grief! the wives of Arvalan, Young Azla, young Nealliny, are seen!

Their widow-robes of white, With gold and jewels bright, Each like an Eastern queen.

Woe! woe! around their palankeen,

As on a bridal day,
With symphony, and dance, and song,
Their kindred and their friends come on.
The dance of sacrifice! the funeral song!
And next the victim slaves in long array,
Richly bedight to grace the fatal day,

Move onward to their death;
The clarions' stirring breath
Lifts their thin robes in every flowing
fold,

And swells the woven gold,
That on the agitated air 99
Flutters and glitters to the torch's glare.

A man and maid of aspect wan and wild, Then, side by side, by bowmen guarded,

O wretched father! O unhappy child! Them were all eyes of all the throng exploring . .

Is this the daring man Who raised his fatal hand at Arvalan? Is this the wretch condemn'd to feel Kehama's dreadful wrath? Then were all hearts of all the throng deploring:

For not in that innumerable throng Was one who loved the dead; for who could know

> What aggravated wrong Provoked the desperate blow!

Far, far behind, beyond all reach of sight.

In order'd files the torches flow along, One ever-lengthening line of gliding light:

Far . . far behind.

Rolls on the undistinguishable clamour, Of horn, and trump, and tambour; Incessant as the roar 120 Of streams which down the wintry mountain pour,

And louder than the dread commotion Of breakers on a rocky shore, When the winds rage over the waves, And Ocean to the Tempest raves.

And now toward the bank they go, Where winding on their way below, Deep and strong the waters flow. Here doth the funeral pile appear With myrrh and ambergris bestrew'd, And built of precious sandal wood. They cease their music and their outcry here. Gently they rest the bier:

They wet the face of Arvalan, No sign of life the sprinkled drops excite; They feel his breast, . . no motion there; They feel his lips. . . no breath: For not with feeble, nor with erring hand,

The brave avenger dealt the blow of death.

Then with a doubling peal and deeper blast.

The tambours and the trumpets sound on high.

And with a last and loudest cry, They call on Arvalan.

10

Woe! woe! for Azla takes her seat Upon the funeral pile! Calmly she took her seat. Calmly the whole terrific pomp survey'd; As on her lap the while The lifeless head of Arvalan was laid.

150

Woe! woe! Nealliny, The young Nealliny! They strip her ornaments away, Bracelet and anklet, ring, and chain, and zone;

Around her neck they leave The marriage knot alone, . . That marriage band, which when Yon waning moon was young, Around her virgin neck With bridal joy was hung. Then with white flowers, the coronal of death. 160 Her jetty locks they crown.

O sight of misery! You cannot hear her cries, . . their sound In that wild dissonance is drown'd; . .

But in her face you see The supplication and the agony, . . See in her swelling throat the desperate strength

That with vain effort struggles yet for life; [strife,

Her arms contracted now in fruitless

Now wildly at full length

Towards the crowd in vain for pity

spread...

They force her on, they bind her to the dead.

13

Then all around retire;
Circling the pile, the ministering
Bramins stand,
Each lifting in his hand a torch on fire.
Alone the Father of the dead advanced
And lit the funeral pyre.

14

At once on every side
The circling torches drop,
At once on every side
The fragrant oil is pour'd,
At once on every side
The rapid flames rush up.
Then hand in hand the victim band
Roll in the dance around the funeral
pyre;

Their garments' flying folds
Float inward to the fire;
In drunken whirl they wheel around;
One drops, . . another plunges in;
And still with overwhelming din 190
The tambours and the trumpets sound;
And clap of hand, and shouts, and cries,
From all the multitude arise;
While round and round, in giddy wheel,
Intoxicate they roll and reel,
Till one by one whirl'd in they fall,
And the devouring flames have swallow'd all.

15

Then all was still; the drums and clarions ceased; [awe; The multitude were hush'd in silent Only the roaring of the flames was heard.

II. THE CURSE

1

ALONE towards the Table of the Dead Kehama moved; there on the altarstone

Honey and rice he spread.

There with collected voice and painful

He call'd upon his son.

Lo! Arvalan appears;

Only Kehama's powerful eye beheld The thin ethercal spirit hovering nigh; Only the Rajah's ear

Received his feeble breath. 10
And is this all? the mournful Spirit said,
This all that thou canst give me after
death?

This unavailing pomp,

These empty pageantries that mock the

dead!

2

In bitterness the Rajah heard, And groan'd, and smote his breast, and o'er his face

Cowl'd the white mourning vest.

3

ARVALAN

Art thou not powerful, . . even like a God?

And must I, through my years of wandering,

Shivering and naked to the elements, 20
In wretchedness await

The hour of Yamen's wrath? I thought thou wouldst embody me anew,

Undying as I am, . . Yea, re-create me! . . Father, is this all? This all? and thou Almighty!

4

But in that wrongful and upbraiding tone,

Kehama found relief,
For rising anger half supprest his grief.

Reproach not me! he cried, 30
Had I not spell-secured thee from disease,
Fire, sword, . . all common accidents
of man, . .

And thou! . . fool, fool . . to perish by a stake!

And by a peasant's arm!..

Even now, when from reluctant Heaven, Forcing new gifts and mightier attributes,

So soon I should have quell'd the Death-God's power.

5

Waste not thy wrath on me, quoth Arvalan.

It was my hour of folly! Fate prevail'd, Nor boots it to reproach me that I fell. I am in misery, Father! Other souls Predoom'd to Indra's Heaven, enjoy the dawn 42

Of bliss, . . to them the temper'd elements

Minister joy: genial delight the sun Sheds on their happy being, and the stars

Effuse on them benignant influences; And thus o'er earth and air they roam at will.

And when the number of their days is full,

Go fearlessly before the aweful throne. But I,.. all naked feeling and raw life,.. What worse than this hath Yamen's hell in store?

If ever thou didst love me, mercy, Father!

Save me, for thou canst save.. the Elements

Know and obey thy voice.

6

KEHAMA

The Elements
Shall sin no more against thee; whilst
I speak

Already dost thou feel their power is gone.

Fear not! I cannot call again the past,

Fate hath made that its own; but Fate shall yield

To me the future; and thy doom be fix'd

By mine, not Yamen's will. Meantime all power

Whereof thy feeble spirit can be made Participant, I give. Is there aught else To mitigate thy lot?

ARVALAN

Only the sight of vengeance. Give me that!

Vengeance, full, worthy, vengeance!..
not the stroke

Of sudden punishment, . . no agony
That spends itself and leaves the wretch
at rest.

But lasting long revenge.

KEHAMA

What, boy? is that cup sweet? then take thy fill!

7

So as he spake, a glow of dreadful pride Inflamed his cheek, with quick and angry stride

He moved toward the pile,
And raised his hand to hush the crowd,
and cried,

Bring forth the murderer! At the Rajah's voice,

Calmly, and like a man whom fear had stunn'd,

Ladurlad came, obedient to the call; But Kailyal started at the sound,

And gave a womanly shriek, and back she drew, 79

And eagerly she roll'd her eyes around, As if to seek for aid, albeit she knew No aid could there be found.

It chanced that near her on the river brink.

The sculptured form of Marriataly stood:

It was an Idol roughly hewn of wood,
Artless, and mean, and rude;
The Goddess of the poor was she;
None else regarded her with piety.
But when that holy Image Kailyal
view'd,

To that she sprung, to that she clung, On her own Goddess, with close-clasping arms,

For life the maiden hung.

9

They seized the maid; with unrelenting grasp

They bruised her tender limbs;
She, nothing yielding, to this only hope
Clings with the strength of frenzy and
despair.

She screams not now, she breathes not now,

She sends not up one vow,
She forms not in her soul one secret
prayer,

All thought, all feeling, and all powers of life 100

In the one effort centering. Wrathful they

With tug and strain would force the maid away ; . .

Didst thou, O Marriataly, see their strife, In pity didst thou see the suffering maid? Or was thine anger kindled, that rude hands

Assail'd thy holy Image?.. for behold The holy image shakes!

10

Irreverently bold, they deem the maid Relax'd her stubborn hold,

And now with force redoubled drag their prey;

And now the rooted Idol to their sway Bends, . . yields, . . and now it falls. But then they scream,

For lo! they feel the crumbling bank give way,

And all are plunged into the stream.

11

She hath escaped my will, Kehama cried, She hath escaped, . . but thou art here, I have thee still.

The worser criminal!

The worser criminal!
And on Ladurlad, while he spake, severe

He fix'd his dreadful frown. 120
The strong reflection of the pile
Lit his dark lineaments.

Lit the protruded brow, the gathered, front,

The steady eye of wrath.

12

But while the fearful silence yet endured,
Ladurlad roused himself;
Ere yet the voice of destiny
Which trembled on the Rajah's lips was
loosed.

Eager he interposed, 129
As if despair had waken'd him to hope;
Mercy! oh mcrcy! only in defence..
Only instinctively,..

Only to save my child, I smote the Prince:

King of the world, be merciful! Crush me, . . but torture not!

13

The Man-Almighty deign'd him no reply, Still he stood silent; in no human mood Of mercy, in no hesitating thought

Of right and justice. At the length he raised

His brow yet unrelax'd, . . his lips unclosed, 140

And uttered from the heart,
With the whole feeling of his soul, enforced,

The gathered vengeance came.

I charm thy life From the weapons of strife. From stone and from wood. From fire and from flood. From the scrpent's tooth. And the beasts of blood: From Sickness I charm thee. 150 And Time shall not harm thee: But Earth which is mine, Its fruits shall deny thee; And Water shall hear me, And know thee and fly thee: And the Winds shall not touch thee When they pass by thee, And the Dews shall not wet thee, When they fall nigh thee: And thou shalt seek Death 160 To release thee, in vain: Thou shalt live in thy pain While Kehama shall reign, With a fire in thy heart, And a fire in thy brain; And Sleep shall obey me, And visit thee never. And the Curse shall be on thee For ever and ever.

15

There where the Curse had stricken him. There stood the miserable man, 171 There stood Ladurlad, with loose-hanging arms,

And eyes of idiot wandering. Was it a dream? alas. He heard the river flow. He heard the crumbling of the pile, He heard the wind which shower'd The thin white ashes round. There motionless he stood. As if he hoped it were a dream, 180 And feared to move, lest he should prove The actual misery;

And still at times he met Kehama's eye, Kehama's eye that fastened on him still. But farthest from the fatal place is best.

III. THE RECOVERY

1

THE Rajah turn'd toward the pile again, Loud rose the song of death from all the crowd:

Their din the instruments begin, And once again join in With overwhelming sound. Ladurlad starts, . . he looks around; What hast thou here in view. O wretched man! in this disastrous

The soldier train, the Bramins who renew

Their ministry around the funeral pyre, The empty palankeens, The dimly-fading fire.

2

Where too is she whom most his heart held dear,

His best-beloved Kailyal, where is she, The solace and the joy of many a year Of widowhood? is she then gone,

And is he left all-utterly alone, To bear his blasting curse, and none

To succour or deplore him? He staggers from the dreadful spot; the throng

Give way in fear before him; Like one who carries pestilence about, Shuddering they shun him, where he moves along.

And now he wanders on Beyond the noisy rout; He cannot fly and leave his Curse behind. Yet doth he seem to find A comfort in the change of circumstance.

Adown the shore he strays, Unknowing where his wretched feet shall rest.

By this in the orient sky appears the gleam

Of day. Lo! what is yonder in the stream.

Down the slow river floating slow,
In distance indistinct and dimly seen?
The childless one with idle eye
Followed its motion thoughtlessly;
Idly he gazed unknowing why,
And half unconscious that he watch'd
its way.

Belike it is a tree 40

Which some rude tempest, in its sudden sway,

Tore from the rock, or from the hollow shore

The undermining stream hath swept away.

4

But when anon outswelling by its side,
A woman's robe he spied,
Oh then Ladurlad started,
As one, who in his grave
Had heard an Angel's call.
Yea, Marriataly, thou hast deign'd to
save!

Yea, Goddoss! it is she, 50
Kailyal, still clinging senselessly
To thy dear Image, and in happy hour
Upborne amid the wave
By that preserving power.

5

Headlong in hope and in joy
Ladurlad plunged in the water;
The Water knew Kehama's spell,
The Water shrunk before him.
Blind to the miracle,
He rushes to his daughter,

60

And treads the river-depths in transport wild,

And clasps and saves his child.

(

Upon the farther side a level shore Of sand was spread: thither Ladurlad

His daughter, holding still with senseless hand

The saving Goddess; there upon the sand He laid the livid maid.

Raised up against his knees her drooping head;

Bent to her lips, . . her lips as pale as death, . .

If he might feel her breath, 70 His own the while in hope and dread suspended;

Chafed her cold breast, and ever and anon

Let his hand rest, upon her heart extended.

7

Soon did his touch perceive, or fancy there,

The first faint motion of returning life. He chafes her feet and lays them bare In the sun; and now again upon her breast

Lays his hot hand; and now her lips he prest,

For now the stronger throb of life he knew;

And her lips tremble too! 80
The breath comes palpably:
Her quivering lids unclose,
Feebly and feebly fall,

Relapsing as it seem'd to dead repose.

Q

So in her father's arms thus languidly, While over her with earnest gaze he hung,

Silent and motionless she lay,
And painfully and slowly writhed at fits,
At fits to short convulsive starts was
stung.

89

Till when the struggle and strong agony
Had left her, quietly she lay reposed:
Her eyes now resting on Ladurlad's face,
Relapsing now, and now again unclosed.
The look she fix'd upon his face, implies
Nor thought nor feeling; senselessly
she lies, [eyes.
Composed like one who sleeps with open

9

Long he leant over her,
In silence and in fear.

Kailyal!.. at length he cried in such
a tone
As a poor mother ventures who draws
near, 200

With silent footstep, to her child's sick bed. [her head, My Father! cried the maid, and raised Awakening then to life and thought, ... thou here?

For when his voice she heard,
The dreadful past recurr'd,
Which dimly, like a dream of pain,
Till now with troubled sense confused
her brain.

10

And hath he spared us then? she cried,
Half rising as she spake,

For hope and joy the sudden strength supplied;

In mercy hath he curb'd his cruel will, That still thou livest? But as thus she said,

Impatient of that look of hope, her sire Shook hastily his head;

Oh! he hath laid a Curse upon my life,
A clinging curse, quoth he;

Hath sent a fire into my heart and brain, A burning fire, for ever there to be!

The Winds of Heaven must never breathe on me:

The Rains and Dews must never fall on me; 120

Water must mock my thirst and shrink from me;

The common Earth must yield no fruit to me:

Sleep, blessed Sleep! must never light on me:

And Death, who comes to all, must fly from me,

And never, never set Ladurlad free.

11

This is a dream! exclaim'd the incredulous maid,

Yet in her voice the while a fear exprest, Which in her larger eye was manifest. This is a dream! she rose and laid her

Upon her father's brow, to try the charm;

He could not bear the pressure there;.. he shrunk,..

He warded off her arm,
As though it were an enemy's blow, he
smote

His daughter's arm aside. Her eye glanced down, his mantle she espied

And caught it up;.. Oh misery!

Kailyal cried, [yet
He bore me from the river-depths, and
His garment is not wet!

IV. THE DEPARTURE

1

RECLINED beneath a Cocoa's feathery shade

Ladurlad lies,

And Kailyal on his lap her head hath laid,

To hide her streaming eyes.

The boatman, sailing on his easy way,
With envious eye beheld them where
they lay;

For every herb and flower

Was fresh and fragrant with the early
dew, [hour,
Sweet sung the birds in that delicious
And the cool gale of morning as it blew,
Not yet subdued by day's increasing
power, 11

Ruffling the surface of the silvery stream, Swept o'er the moisten'd sand, and rais'd no shower.

Telling their tale of love,
The boatman thought they lay
At that lone hour, and who so blest as
they!

2

But now the Sun in heaven is high,
The little songsters of the sky
Sit silent in the sultry hour,
They pant and palpitate with heat;
Their bills are open languidly
To catch the passing air;
They hear it not, they feel it not,
It murmurs not, it moves not.
The boatman, as he looks to land,
Admires what men so mad to linger
there,

For yonder Cocoa's shade behind them falls,

A single spot upon the burning sand.

9

There all the morning was Ladurlad laid, Silent and motionless like one at ease; There motionless upon her father's knees

Reclined the silent maid. 32
The man was still, pondering with steady
mind,

As if it were another's Curse,
His own portentous lot;
Scanning it o'er and o'er in busy thought,
As though it were a last night's tale of

Before the cottage door By some old beldam sung, While young and old, assembled round, Listened, as if by witchery bound, 4r In fearful pleasure to her wondrous tongue.

4

Musing so long he lay, that all things seem

Unreal to his sense, even like a dream,
A monstrous dream of things which
could not be.

That beating, burning brow, . . why it was now [there

The height of noon, and he was lying
In the broad sun, all bare!
What if he felt no wind? the air was

What if he felt no wind? the air was still.

That was the general will 50 Of Nature, not his own peculiar doom; Yon rows of rice erect and silent stand, The shadow of the Cocoa's lightest plume

Is steady on the sand.

Ū

Is it indeed a dream? he rose to try, Impatient to the water side he went, And down he bent,

And in the stream he plunged his hasty

To break the visionary charm.
With fearful eye and fearful heart, 60
His daughter watch'd the event;
She saw the start and shudder,
She heard the in-drawn groan,
For the Water knew Kehama's charm,

The Water shrunk before his arm.

His dry hand moved about unmoisten'd

there;

As easily might that dry hand avail

To stop the passing gale,
Or grasp the impassive air.
He is Almighty then!

Exclaim'd the wretched man in his
despair:

Air knows him, Water knows him; Sleep His dreadful word will keep; Even in the grave there is no rest for me, Cut off from that last hope, . . the

wretch's joy;
And Veeshnoo hath no power to save,
Nor Seeva to destroy.

G

Oh! wrong not them! quoth Kailyal,
Wrong not the Heavenly Powers!
Our hope is all in them: They are not
blind!

And lighter wrongs than ours,
And lighter crimes than his,
Have drawn the Incarnate down among
mankind.

Already have the Immortals heard our cries.

And in the mercy of their righteousness
Beheld us in the hour of our distress!
She spake with streaming eyes,
Where pious love and ardent feeling
beam.

And turning to the Image, threw Her grateful arms around it, . . It was

Who savedst me from the stream!

My Marriataly, it was thou!

I had not else been here

To share my Father's Curse,

To suffer now, . . and yet to thank thee
thus!

7

Here then, the maiden cried, dear Father, here Raise our own Goddess, our divine Preserver!

The mighty of the earth despise her rites,
She loves the poor who serve her.
Set up her Image here, 100
With heart and voice the guardian
Goddess bless,

For jealously would she resent Neglect and thanklessness;..

Set up her Image here,
And bless her for her aid with tongue
and soul sincere.

Q

So saying on her knees the maid Began the pious toil.

Soon their joint labour scoops the easy soil; [hand,

They raise the Image up with reverent And round its rooted base they heap the sand.

O Thou whom we adore,
O Merriataly, thee do I implore,
The virgin cried; my Goddess, pardon
thou

The unwilling wrong, that I no more, With dance and song,

Can do thy daily service, as of yore!
The flowers which last I wreathed around
thy brow,

Are withering there; and never now Shall I at eve adore thee,

And swimming round with arms outspread, 120

Poise the full pitcher on my head, In dexterous dance before thee, While underneath the reedy shed, at rest My father sat the evening rites to view,

And blest thy name, and blest
His daughter too.

9

Then heaving from her heart a heavy sigh,
O Goddess! from that happy home,
cried she.

The Almighty Man hath forced us!

And homeward with the thought unconsciously 130

She turn'd her dizzy eye. . . But there on high,

With many a dome, and pinnacle, and spire,

The summits of the Golden Palaces Blazed in the dark blue sky, aloft, like fire.

Father, away! she cried, away! Why linger we so nigh? For not to him hath Nature given The thousand eves of Deity, Always and every where with open sight.

To persecute our flight! 140 Away . . away ! she said, And took her father's hand, and like a child

He followed where she led.

THE SEPARATION

EVENING comes on: arising from the stream.

Homeward the tall flamingo wings his flight;

And where he sails athwart the setting beam.

His scarlet plumage glows with deeper light.

The watchman, at the wish'd approach of night,

Gladly forsakes the field, where he all dav.

To scare the winged plunderers from their prey,

With shout and sling, on yonder clay-built height,

Hath borne the sultry ray. Hark! at the Golden Palaces The Bramin strikes the hour.

For leagues and leagues around, the brazen sound

Rolls through the stillness of departing

Like thunder far away.

Behold them wandering on their hopeless way,

Unknowing where they stray,

Yet sure where'er they stop to find no rest.

The evening gale is blowing, It plays among the trees; Like plumes upon a warrior's crest, They see you cocoas tossing to the

breeze. Ladurlad views them with impatient mind.

Impatiently he hears The gale of evening blowing, The sound of waters flowing, As if all sights and sounds combined To mock his irremediable woe:

For not for him the blessed waters flow, For not for him the gales of evening blow, A fire is in his heart and brain,

And Nature hath no healing for his pain.

The Moon is up, still pale Amid the lingering light.

A cloud ascending in the eastern sky, Sails slowly o'er the vale,

And darkens round and closes in the night.

No hospitable house is nigh, No traveller's home the wanderers to invite:

Forlorn, and with long watching overworn.

The wretched father and the wretched child

Lie down amid the wild.

Before them full in sight, A white flag flapping to the windsof night Marks where the tiger seized a human prey.

Far, far away with natural dread, Shunning the perilous spot, At other times abhorrent had they fled; But now they heed it not.

Nothing they care; the boding deathflag now

10

In vain for them may gleam and flutter there. 50

Despair and agony in him,
Prevent all other thought;
And Kailyal hath no heart or sense for
aught.

Save her dear father's strange and miserable lot.

5

There in the woodland shade,
Upon the lap of that unhappy maid,
His head Ladurlad laid,
And never word he spake;
Nor heaved he one complaining sigh,
Nor groaned he with his misery, 60
But silently for her dear sake
Endured the raging pain.
And now the moon was hid on high,

No stars were glimmering in the sky;
She could not see her father's eye,
How red with burning agony;
Perhaps he may be cooler now,
She hoped, and long'd to touch his

With gentle hand, yet did not dare
To lay the painful pressure there. 70
Now forward from the tree she bent,
And anxiously her head she leant,
And listen'd to his breath.

Ladurlad's breath was short and quick,
Yet regular it came,
And like the slumber of the sick.

In pantings still the same.

Oh if he sleeps!.. her lips unclose,
Intently listening to the sound,
That equal sound so like repose. 80

Still quietly the sufferer lies,

Bearing his torment now with resolute

will:

He neither moves, nor groans, nor sighs.

Doth satiate cruelty bestow

This little respite to his woe,

She thought, or are there Gods who look

below?

в

Perchance, thought Kailyal, willingly deceived,

Our Marriataly hath his pain relieved, And she hath bade the blessed sleep assuage 89

His agony, despite the Rajah's rage. That was a hope which fill'd her gushing eyes,

And made her heart in silent yearnings rise,

To bless the power divine in thankfulness.

And yielding to that joyful thought her mind,

Backward the maid her aching head reclined

Against the tree, and to her father's breath [ear.

In fear she hearken'd still with earnest But soon forgetful fits the effort broke; In starts of recollection then she woke,

Till now benignant Nature over-

came roo The Virgin's weary and exhausted frame, Nor able more her painful watch to keep, She closed her heavy lids, and sunk to sleep.

7

Vain was her hope! he did not rest from pain,

The Curse was burning in his brain; Alas! the innocent maiden thought he slept,

But Sleep the Rajah's dread commandment kept,

Sleep knew Kehama's Curse.

The dews of night fell round them now,
They never bathed Ladurlad's brow.

They knew Kehama's Curse. 111
The night-wind is abroad.

Aloft it moves among the stirring trees;
He only heard the breeze, . .
No healing aid to him it brought.

It play'd around his head and touch'd him not.

It knew Kehama's Curse.

Q

Listening, Ladurlad lay in his despair, If Kailyal slept, for wherefore should she share

Her father's wretchedness, which none could cure? 120

Better alone to suffer; he must bear The burden of his Curse, but why endure The unavailing presence of her grief? She too, apart from him, might find relief;

For dead the Rajah deem'd her, and as thus

Already she his dread revenge had fled, So might she still escape and live secure.

9

Gently he lifts his head,
And Kailyal does not feel; 129
Gently he rises up,.. she slumbers still;
Gently he steals away with silent
tread.

Anon she started, for she felt him gone; She call'd, and through the stillness of the night,

His step was heard in flight.

Mistrustful for a moment of the sound,
She listens; till the step is heard no
more;

But then she knows that he indeed is gone,

And with a thrilling shriek she rushes on.

The darkness and the wood impede her speed;

She lifts her voice again, 140
Ladurlad!.. and again, alike in vain,
And with a louder cry [away,
Straining its tone to hoarseness; .. far
Selfish in misery,

He heard the call and faster did he fly.

10

She leans against that tree whose jutting bough

Smote her so rudely. Her poor heart How audibly it panted,

With sudden stop and start;
Her breath how short and painfully it
came!

Hark! all is still around her, . .
And the night so utterly dark,
She opened her eyes and she closed
them.

And the blackness and blank were the

11

'Twas like a dream of horror, and she stood

Half doubting whether all indeed were true.

A tiger's howl loud echoing through the wood.

Roused her; the dreadful sound she knew,

And turn'd instinctively to what she fear'd.

Far off the tiger's hungry howl was heard;

A nearer horror met the maiden's view, For right before her a dim form appear'd,

A human form in that black night,
Distinctly shaped by its own lurid light,
Such light as the sickly moon is seen
to shed.

Through spell-raised fogs, a bloody baleful red.

12

That Spectre fix'd his eyes upon her full; The light which shone in their accursed

Was like a light from Hell,
And it grew deeper, kindling with the
view. 170
She could not turn her sight

From that infernal gaze, which like a spell

Bound her, and held her rooted to the ground.

It palsied every power, Her limbs avail'd her not in that dread

There was no moving thence, Thought, memory, sense were gone: She heard not now the tiger's nearer cry, She thought not on her father now, Her cold heart's blood ran back, 180

Her hand lay senseless on the bough it clasp'd,

Her feet were motionless: Her fascinated eyes Like the stone eye-balls of a statue fix'd, Yet conscious of the sight that blasted them.

13

The wind is abroad. It opens the clouds; Scatter'd before the gale, They skurry through the sky, And the darkness retiring rolls over the vale. The Stars in their beauty come forth on high,

And through the dark blue night The Moon rides on triumphant, broad and bright.

Distinct and darkening in her light, Appears that Spectre foul, The moon-beam gives his face and form to sight.

The shape of man, The living form and face of Arvalan!.. His hands are spread to clasp her.

But at that sight of dread the Maid Of a broad manchineil, and there the awoke:

As if a lightning-stroke Had burst the spell of fear,

Away she broke all franticly, and fled. There stood a temple near beside the

An open fane of Pollear, gentle God, To whom the travellers for protection pray.

With elephantine head and eye severe, Here stood his image, such as when he seiz'd

And tore the rebel Giant from the ground, 200

With mighty trunk wreathed round His impotent bulk, and on his tusks, on high

Impaled upheld him between earth and sky.

15

Thither the affrighted Maiden sped her flight,

And she hath reach'd the place of sanctuary;

And now within the temple in despite, Yea, even before the altar, in his sight,

Hath Arvalan with flesh.y arm of might Seized her. That instant the insulted God

Caught him aloft, and from his sinuous grasp,

As if from some tort catapult let loose, Over the forest hurl'd him all abroad.

16

O'ercome with dread, She tarried not to see what heavenly Power

> Had saved her in that hour; Breathless and faint she fled.

And now her foot struck on the knotted root

Maid

Fell senselessly beneath the deadly shade.

VI. CASYAPA

1

Shall this then be thy fate, O lovely Maid.

Thus, Kailyal, must thy sorrows then be ended?

Her face upon the ground,
Her arms at length extended,
There like a corpse behold her laid
Beneath the deadly shade.
What if the hungry tiger, prowling by,
Should snuff his banquet nigh?
Alas, Death needs not now his ministry;
The baleful boughs hang o'er her, 10
The poison-dews descend.
What Power will now restore her?
What God will be her friend?

2

Bright and so beautiful was that fair night,

It might have calm'd the gay amid their mirth,

And given the wretched a delight in tears.

One of the Glendoveers,
The loveliest race of all of heavenly
birth.

Hovering with gentle motion o'er the earth,

Amid the moonlight air, 20
In sportive flight was floating round and round,

Unknowing where his joyous way was tending.

He saw the Maid where motionless she

And stoopt his flight descending,
And raised her from the ground.
Her heavy eye-lids are half closed,
Her cheeks are pale and livid like the
dead.

Down hang her loose arms lifelessly, Down hangs her languid head. 3

With timely pity touch'd for one so fair,
The gentle Glendoveer 3r
Press'd her thus pale and senseless to
his breast.

And springs aloft in air with sinewy wings, And bears the Maiden there,

Where Himakoot, the holy Mount, on high From mid-earth rising in mid-Heaven, Shines in its glory like the throne of Even

Soaring with strenuous flight above, He bears her to the blessed Grove, Where in his ancient and august abodes, There dwells old Casyapa, the Sire of Gods.

4

The Father of the Immortals sate,
Where underneath the Tree of Life,
The Fountains of the Sacred River
sprung;

The Father of the Immortals smiled Benignant on his son.

Knowest thou, he said, my child, Ercenia, knowest thou whom thou bringest here,

A mortal to the holy atmosphere?

EREENIA

I found her in the Groves of Earth,

Beneath a poison-tree,

Thus lifeless as thou seest her.

In pity have I brought her to these bowers,

Not erring, Father! by that smile..

By that benignant eye!

CASYAPA

What if the Maid be sinful? if her ways Were ways of darkness, and her death predoom'd

To that black hour of midnight, when the Moon

Hath turn'd her face away,
Unwilling to behold
The unhappy end of guilt?

60

EREENIA

Then what a lie, my Sire, were written here, [died, In these fair characters! and she had Sure proof of purer life and happier doom, [Heaven,

Now in the moonlight, in the eye of If I had left so fair a flower to fade. But thou, . . all knowing as thou art,

Why askest thou of me?

O Father, oldest, holiest, wisest, best,
To whom all things are plain, 70
Why askest thou of me?

CASYAPA Knowest thou Kehama?

EREENIA

The Almighty Man!
Who knows not him and his tremendous
power?

The Tyrant of the Earth, The Enemy of Heaven!

CASYAPA

Fearest thou the Rajah?

EREENIA

He is terrible!

CASYAPA

Yea, he is terrible! such power hath he
That hope hath enter'd Hell. 80
The Asuras and the spirits of the damn'd
Acclaim their Hero; Yamen, with the
might

Of Godhead, scarce can quell
The rebel race accurst: [rise,
Half from their beds of torture they upAnd half uproot their chains.
Is there not fear in Heaven?

The Souls that are in bliss suspend their

The danger hath disturb'd
The calm of Deity, 90
And Brama fears, and Veeshnoo turns
his face

In doubt toward Seeva's throne.

EREENIA

I have seen Indra tremble at his prayers, And at his dreadful penances turn pale. They claim and wrest from Seeva power so yast.

That even Seeva's self, The Highest, cannot grant and be secure.

CASYAPA

And darest thou, Ereenia, brave The Almighty Tyrant's power?

EREENIA

I brave him, Father! I? 100

CASYAPA

Darest thou brave his vengeance?.. For, if not,

Take her again to earth,
Cast her before the tiger in his path,
Or where the death-dew-dropping tree
May work Kehama's will.

EREENIA

Never!

CASYAPA

Then meet his wrath! for He, even He, Hath set upon this worm his wanton foot.

EREENIA

I knew her not, how wretched and how fair,

When here I wafted her. . . Poor Child of Earth, 110

Shall I forsake thee, seeing thee so fair, So wretched? O my Father, let the Maid

Dwell in the Sacred Grove!

CASYAPA

That must not be,

For Force and Evil then would enter here; [sin

Ganges, the holy stream which cleanseth
Would flow from hence polluted in
its springs, [death,

And they who gasp upon its banks in

Feel no salvation. Piety, and Peace, And Wisdom, these are mine; but not the power 120

Which could protect her from the Almighty Man;

Nor when the spirit of dead Arvalan Should persecute her here to glut his rage.

To heap upon her yet more agony, And ripen more damnation for himself.

EREENIA Dead Arvalan?

CASYAPA

All power to him, whereof
The disembodied spirit in its state
Of weakness could be made participant,
Kehama hath assign'd, until his days
Of wandering shall be number'd. 131

EREENIA

Look! she drinks
The gale of healing from the blessed
Groves.
She stirm and lot her hand

She stirs, and lo! her hand Hath touch'd the Holy River in its source,

Who would have shrunk if aught impure were nigh.

CASYAPA

The Maiden, of a truth, is pure from sin.

5

The waters of the Holy Spring
About the hand of Kailyal play;
They rise, they sparkle, and they sing.
Leaping where languidly she lay, 141
As if with that rejoicing stir
The Holy Spring would welcome her.
The Tree of life which o'er her spread,
Benignant bow'd its sacred head,
And dropt its dews of healing;
And her heart-blood at every breath,
Recovering from the strife of death,
Drew in new strength and feeling.
Behold her beautiful in her repose, 150

A life-bloom reddening now her darkbrown cheek;

And lo! her eyes unclose,

Dark as the depth of Ganges' spring profound

When night hangs over it,
Bright as the moon's refulgent beam,
That quivers on its clear up-sparkling
stream.

6

Soon she let fall her lids,
As one who, from a blissful dream
Waking to thoughts of pain,
Fain would return to sleep, and dream
again. 160

Distrustful of the sight,
She moves not, fearing to disturb
The deep and full delight.

In wonder fix'd, opening again her eye She gazes silently,

Thinking her mortal pilgrimage was past, That she had reach'd her heavenly home of rest,

And these were Gods before her, Or spirits of the blest.

7

Lo! at Ereenia's voice. 170
A Ship of Heaven comes sailing down the skies.

Where would'st thou bear her? cries
The ancient Sire of Gods.

Straight to the Swerga, to my Bower of Bliss,

The Glendoveer replies, To Indra's own abodes.

Foe of her foe, were it alone for this Indra should guard her from his vengeance there;

But if the God forbear,

Unwilling yet the perilous strife to try, Or shrinking from the dreadful Rajah's might, . . . 181

Weak as I am, O Father, even I Stand forth in Seeva's sight.

Trust thou in him whate'er betide, And stand forth fearlessly! The Sire of Gods replied:

All that He wills is right, and doubt not thou,

Howe'er our feeble scope of sight May fail us now,

His righteous will in all things must be done.

My blessing be upon thee, O my son!

VII. THE SWERGA

1

THEN in the Ship of Heaven, Erecnia laid

The waking, wondering Maid;
The Ship of Heaven, instinct with
thought, display'd

Its living sail, and glides along the sky.
On either side in wavy tide,
The clouds of morn along its path divide;
The Winds who swept in wild career on

The Winds who swept in wild career on high, [force; Before its presence check their charmed

The Winds that loitering lagg'd along their course,

Around the living Bark enamour'd play, Swell underneath the sail, and sing before its way.

2

That Bark, in shape, was like the furrow'd shell

Wherein the Sea-Nymphsto their parent-King, [bring.

On festal day, their duteous offerings
Its hue? . . Go watch the last green
light [Night;

Ere Evening yields the western sky to Or fix upon the Sun thy strenuous sight Till thou hast reach'd its orb of chrysolite. The sail from end to end display'd Bent, like a rainbow, o'er the Maid.

An Angel's head, with visual eye, 21
Through trackless space, directs its
chosen way;

Nor aid of wing, nor foot, nor fin, Requires to voyage o'er the obedient sky.

Smooth as the swan when not a breeze at even

Disturbs the surface of the silver stream, Through air and sunshine sails the Ship of Heaven.

3

Recumbent there the Maiden glides along

On her aërial way,

How swift she feels not, though the swiftest wind 30

Had flagg'd in flight behind.

Motionless as a sleeping babe she lay, And all serene in mind,

Feeling no fear; for that etherial air With such new life and joyance fill'd her heart,

Fear could not enter there;
For sure she deem'd her mortal part
was o'er,

And she was sailing to the heavenly shore; [beside,

And that angelic form, who moved Was some good Spirit sent to be her guide.

4

Daughter of Earth! therein thou deem'st aright;

And never yet did form more beautiful, In dreams of night descending from on high,

Bless the religious Virgin's gifted sight, Nor like a vision of delight,

Rise on the raptured Poet's inward eye.

Of human form divine was he.

The immortal Youth of Heaven who floated by,

Even such as that divinest form shall be In those blest stages of our onward race, When no infirmity,

Low thought, nor base desire, nor wasting care,

Deface the semblance of our heavenly sire.

The wings of Eagle or of Cherubim Had seem'd unworthy him; Angelic power and dignity and grace Were in his glorious pennons; from the

Down to the ankle reach'd their swelling

Richer than robes of Tyrian dye, that deck

Imperial Majesty:

Their colour like the winter's moonless skv.

When all the stars of midnight's canopy Shine forth; or like the azure deep at

Reflecting back to heaven a brighter

Such was their tint when closed, but when outspread,

The permeating light Shed through their substance thin a

varying hue; Now bright as when the rose,

Beauteous as fragrant, gives to scent and sight

A like delight; now like the juice that

From Douro's generous vine; Or ruby when with deepest red it glows; Or as the morning clouds refulgent shine.

Day,

The Orient, like a shrine,

Kindles as it receives the rising ray, And heralding his way, Proclaims the presence of the Power divine.

Thus glorious were the wings Of that celestial Spirit, as he went Disporting through his native element. Nor these alone

The gorgeous beauties that they gave to view;

Through the broad membrane branched a pliant bone, Spreading like fibres from their parent Its veins like interwoven silver shone.

Or as the chaster hue Of pearls that grace some Sultan's diadem.

Now with slow stroke and strong behold him smite

The buoyant air, and now in gentler flight,

On motionless wing expanded, shoot along.

Through air and sunshine sails the Ship of Heaven:

Far, far beneath them lies The gross and heavy atmosphere of earth;

And with the Swerga gales, The Maid of mortal birth At every breath a new delight inhales. And now toward its port the Ship of Heaven, fflight,

Swift as a falling meteor, shapes its Yet gently as the dews of night that gem.

And do not bend the hare-bell's slenderest stem.

When, at forthcoming of the Lord of Daughter of Earth, Ereenia cried, alight; This is thy place of rest, the Swerga this, Lo, here my Bower of Bliss!

He furl'd his azure wings, which round him fold Graceful as robes of Grecian chief of old.

Graceful as robes of Grecian chief of old.

The happy Kailyal knew not where
to gaze;

Her eyes around in joyful wonder roam, Now turn'd upon the lovely Glendoveer, Now on his heavenly home. 110

EREENIA

Here, Maiden, rest in peace,
And I will guard thee, feeble as I am.
The Almighty Rajah shall not harm
thee here,

While Indra keeps his throne.

KAILYAL

Alas, thou fearest him!
Immortal as thou art, thou fearest him!
I thought that death had saved me from his power;

Not even the dead are safe.

EREENIA

Long years of life and happinoss,
O Child of Earth be thine! 120
From death I sav'd thee, and from all
thy foes

Will save thee, while the Swerga is secure.

KAILYAL

Not me alone, O gentle Deveta!

I have a Father suffering upon earth,
A persecuted, wretched, poor, good man,
For whose strange misery
There is no human help,
And none but I dare comfort him
Beneath Kehama's Curse; 129
O gentle Deveta, protect him too!

EREENIA

Come, plead thyself to Indra! Words like thine

May win their purpose, rouse his slumbering heart, And make him yet put forth his arm to wield

The thunder, while the thunder is his own.

9

Then to the Garden of the Deity Ereenia led the Maid.

In the mid garden tower'd a giant Tree; Rock-rooted on a mountain-top, it grew,

Rear'd its unrivall'd head on high,
And stretch'd a thousand branches o'er
the sky, 140
Drinking with all its leaves colorial day.

Drinking with all its leaves celestial dew.

Lo! where from thence as from a living
well

A thousand torrents flow!

For still in one perpetual shower, Like diamond drops, etherial waters fell From every leaf of all its ample bower.

Rolling adown the steep
From that aërial height,
Through the deep shade of aromatic
trees.

Half-seen, the cataracts shoot their gleams of light, 150

And pour upon the breeze
Their thousand voices; far away the
roar.

In modulations of delightful sound, Half-heard and ever varying, floats around.

Below, an ample Lake expanded lies, Blue as the o'er-arching skies: Forth issuing from that lovely Lake

A thousand rivers water Paradise. Full to the brink, yet never overflowing, They cool the amorous gales, which,

ever blowing, 160

O'er their melodious surface love to stray;

Then winging back their way,
Their vapours to the parent Tree repay;
And ending thus where they began,

And feeding thus the source from whence they came,

The eternal rivers of the Swerga ran, For ever renovate, yet still the same.

10

On that ethereal lake, whose waters lie Blue and transpicuous, like another sky, The Elements had rear'd their King's abode. 170

A strong controuling power their strife suspended,

And there their hostile essences they blended,

To form a Palace worthy of the God. Built on the Lake, the waters were its floor:

And here its walls were water arch'd with fire,

And here were fire with water vaulted

And spires and pinnacles of fire Round watery cupolas aspire, And domes of rainbow rest on fiery towers;

And roofs of flame are turreted around With cloud, and shafts of cloud with flame are bound.

Here too the Elements for ever veer, Ranging around with endless interchanging;

Pursued in love, and so in love pursuing, In endless revolutions here they roll; For ever their mysterious work

renewing;
The parts all shifting, still unchanged the whole.

Even we on earth at intervals descry Gleams of the glory, streaks of flowing light.

Openings of heaven, and streams that flash at night 190

In fitful splendour, through the northern sky.

11

Impatient of delay, Ercenia caught
The Maid aloft, and spread his wings
abroad,

And bore her to the presence of the God.

There Indra sate upon his throne
reclined.

Where Devetas adore him;
The lute of Nared, warbling on the wind,
All tones of magic harmony combined
To sooth his troubled mind,

While the dark-eyed Apsaras danced before him.

In vain the God-musician play'd, In vain the dark-eyed Nymphs of Heaven essay'd

To charm him with their beauties in the dance; [appear,

And when he saw the mortal Maid Led by the heroic Glendoveer, A deeper trouble fill'd his countenance. What hast thou done, Ereenia, said the God.

Bringing a mortal here? And while he spake his eye was on the Maid:

The look he gave was solemn, not severe:

No hope to Kailyal it convey'd,
And yet it struck no fear;
There was a sad displeasure in his air,
But pity too was there.

EREENIA

Hear me, O Indra! On the lower earth
I found this child of man, by what
mishap

I know not, lying in the lap of death.

Aloft I bore her to our Father's grove,

Not having other thought, than when
the gales

Of bliss had heal'd her, upon earth again
To leave its lovely daughter. Other
thoughts 221

Arose, when Casyapa declared her fate;

For she is one who groans beneath the power

Of the dread Rajah, terrible alike
To men and Gods. His son, dead
Arvalan, [power,

Arm'd with a portion, Indra, of thy Already wrested from thee, persecutes The Maid, the helpless one, the innocent. What then behoved me but to waft her here

To my own Bower of Bliss? what other choice? 230

The Spirit of foul Arvalan not yet
Hath power to enter here; here thou
art yet [own.
Supreme, and yet the Swerga is thine

INDRA

No child of man, Ereenia, in the Bowers
Of Bliss may sojourn, till he hath put off
His mortal part; for on mortality
Time and Infirmity and Death attend,
Close followers they, and in their mournful train

Sorrow and Pain and Mutability.

Did these find entrance here, we should behold 240

Our joys, like earthly summers, pass away.

Those joys perchance may pass; a stronger hand

May wrest my sceptre, and unparadise The Swerga; . . but, Ereenia, if we fall, Let it be Fate's own arm that casts us down:

We will not rashly hasten and provoke
The blow, nor bring ourselves the
ruin on.

EREENIA

Fear courts the blow, Fear brings the ruin on. [Destiny Needs must the chariot-wheels of Crush him who throws himself before their track, 250 Patient and prostrate.

INDRA

All may yet be well.

Who knows but Veeshnoo will descend and save,

Once more incarnate?

EREENIA

Look not there for help,

Nor build on unsubstantial hope thy
trust.

Our Father Casyapa hath said he turns His doubtful eye to Seeva, even as thou Dost look to him for aid. But thine own strength

Should for thine own salvation be put forth; 260

Then might the higher Powers approving see

And bless the brave resolve. . . Oh, that my arm

Could wield you lightnings which play idly there,

In inoffensive radiance round thy head!
The Swerga should not need a champion
now, [vain!

Nor Earth implore deliverance still in

INDRA

Thinkest thou I want the will? Rash Son of Heaven,

What if my arm be feeble as thine own Against the dread Kehama? He went

Conquering in irresistible career, 270
Till his triumphant car had measured
o'er

The insufficient earth, and all the Kings Of men received his yoke; then had he won

His will, to ride upon their necks elate,
And crown his conquests with the
sacrifice

That should, to men and gods, proclaim him Lord [World,

And Sovereign Master of the vassal Sole Rajah, the Omnipotent below.

The steam of that portentous sacrifice Arose to Heaven. Then was the hour to strike; 280

Then in the consummation of his pride, His height of glory, then the thunder-

Should have gone forth, and hurl'd him from his throne

Down to the fiery floor of Padalon, To everlasting burnings, agony Eternal, and remorse which knows no end.

That hour went by: grown impious in success.

By prayer and penances he wrested now Such power from Fate, that soon, if Seeva turn not 289

His eyes on earth, and no Avatar save, Soon will he seize the Swerga for his own, Roll on through Padalon his chariot wheels.

Tear up the adamantine bolts which lock The accurst Asuras to its burning floor, And force the drink of Immortality From Yamen's charge. . . Vain were it now to strive:

My thunder cannot pierce the sphere of power

Wherewith, as with a girdle, he is bound.

RAILYAL

Take me to earth, O gentle Deveta!

Take me again to earth! This is no place 300

Of rest for me!..my Father still must bear

His curse.. he shall not bear it all alone; Take me to earth, that I may follow him!..

I do not fear the Almighty Man! the Gods [Powers

Are feeble here; but there are higher Who will not turn their eyes from wrongs like ours;

Take me to earth, O gentle Deveta!..

12

Saying thus she knelt, and to his knees she clung

And bow'd her head, in tears and silence praying.

Rising anon, around his neck she flung
Her arms, and there with folded
hands she hung,
311
And fixing on the guardian Glendoveer

Her eyes, more eloquent than Angel's tongue, [here! Again she cried, There is no comfort

I must be with my Father in his pain

I must be with my Father in his pain . . Take me to earth, O Deveta, again!

13

Indra with admiration heard the Maid.
O Child of Earth, he cried,

Already in thy spirit thus divine,

Whatever weal or woo betide, 320 Be that high sense of duty still thy guide, And all good Powers will aid a soul like thine.

Then turning to Ereenia, thus he said, Take her where Ganges hath its second birth,

Below our sphere, and yet above the earth; [power

There may Ladurlad rest beyond the Of the dread Rajah, till the fated hour.

VIII. THE SACRIFICE

1

Dost thou tremble, O Indra, O God of the Sky,

Why slumber those thunders of thine?

Dost thou tremble on high, . .

Wilt thou tamely the Swerga resign, . . Art thou smitten, O Indra, with dread? Or seest thou not, seest thou not, Monarch divine.

How many a day to Seeva's shrine Kehama his victim hath led?

Nine and ninety days are fled,

Nine and ninety steeds have bled; ro One more, the rite will be complete, One victim more, and this the dreadful day. [seat, Then will the impious Rajah seize thy

Then will the impious Rajah seize thy And wrest the thunder-sceptre from thy sway.

Along the mead the hallow'd Steed Yet bends at liberty his way; At noon his consummating blood will flow.

O day of woe! above, below, That blood confirms the Almighty Tyrant's reign!

Thou tremblest, O Indra, O God of the Sky, 20

Thy thunder is vain,
Thou tremblest on high for thy power!
But where is Veeshnoo at this hour,
But where is Seeva's eye?
Is the Destroyer blind?
Is the Preserver careless for mankind?

2

Along the mead the hallow'd Steed Still wanders wheresoe'er he will, O'er hill, or dale, or plain; 29 No human hand hath trick'd that mane From which he shakes the morning dew; His mouth has never felt the rein, His lips have never froth'd the chain: For pure of blemish and of stain, His neck unbroke to mortal yoke, Like Nature free the Steed must be. Fit offering for the Immortals he. A year and day the Steed must stray Wherever chance may guide his way, Before he fall at Seeva's shrine: 40 The year and day have pass'd away.

divine.

And now at noon the Steed must bleed,
The perfect rite to-day must force the
meed [bestow;

Nor touch of man hath marr'd the rite

Which Fate reluctant shudders to

Then must the Swerga-God Yield to the Tyrant of the world below; Then must the Devetas obey The Rajah's rod, and groan beneath his hateful sway.

3

The Sun rides high; the hour is nigh;

The multitude who long,

Lest aught should mar the rite,

In circle wide on every side,

Have kept the Steed in sight,

Contract their circle now, and drive him

on. [court,
Drawn in long files before the TempleThe Rajah's archers flank an ample

space;
Here, moving onward still, they drive him near, [here.

Then, opening, give him way to enter

4

Behold him, how he starts and flings his head! 60

On either side in glittering order spread, The archers ranged in narrowing lines appear;

The multitude behind close up the rear With moon-like bend, and silently await

The aweful end.

The rite that shall from Indra wrest his power.

In front, with far-stretched walls, and many a tower,

Turret and dome and pinnacle elate, The huge Pagoda seems to load the land:

And there before the gate
The Bramin band expectant stand,
The axe is ready for Kehama's hand.

Б

Hark! at the Golden Palaces
The Bramin strikes the time!
One, two, three, four, a thrice-told
chime,

And then again, one, two.

The bowl that in its vessel floats, anew
Must fill and sink again,
Then will the final stroke be due.
The Sun rides high the poon is night

The Sun rides high, the noon is nigh,
And silently, as if spell bound,
The multitude expect the sound.

6

Lo! how the Steed, with sudden start,
Turns his quick head to every part;
Long files of men on every side appear.
The sight might well his heart affright,
And yet the silence that is here
Inspires a stranger fear;
For not a murmur, not a sound
Of breath or motion rises round,

Of breath or motion rises round, 90
No stir is heard in all that mighty crowd;
He neighs, and from the temple-wall
The voice re-echoes loud.

Loud and distinct, as from a hill Across a lonely vale, when all is still.

7

Within the temple, on his golden throne Reclined, Kehama lies, Watching with steady eyes

The perfumed light that, burning bright,
Metes out the passing hours. 100
On either hand his cunuchs stand,

Freshening with fans of peacock-plumes the air,

Which, redolent of all rich gums and flowers,

Seems, overcharged with sweets, to stagnate there. [slow Lo! the time-taper's flame ascending Creeps up its coil toward the fated line; Kehama rises and goes forth,

And from the altar, ready where it lies, He takes the axe of sacrifice.

8

That instant from the crowd, with sudden shout, 110

A Man sprang out

To lay upon the Steed his hand profane. A thousand archers, with unerring eye, At once let fly,

And with their hurtling arrows fill the sky.

In vain they fall upon him fast as rain;
He bears a charmed life, which may
defy

All weapons, . . and the darts that whizz around,

As from an adamantine panoply Repell'd, fall idly to the ground. 120 Kehama clasp'd his hands in agony And saw him grasp the hallow'd courser's mane,

Spring up with sudden bound,
And with a frantic cry,
And madman's gesture, gallop round
and round.

a

They seize, they drag him to the Rajah's feet.

What doom will now be his, . . what vengeance meet

Will he, who knows no mercy, now require?

The obsequious guards around, with blood-hound eye,

Look for the word, in slow-consuming fire, 130

By piece-meal death, to make the wretch expire, [high, Or hoist his living careass, hook'd on To feed the fowls and insects of the sky; Or if aught worse inventive cruelty

To that remorseless heart of royalty
Might prompt, accursed instruments
they stand

To work the wicked will with wicked hand.

Far other thoughts were in the multitude;

Pity, and human feelings, held them still;

And stifled sighs and groans supprest were there, 140
And many a secret curse and inward prayer

Call'd on the insulted Gods to save mankind.

Expecting some new crime, in fear they stood,

Some horror which would make the natural blood

Start, with cold shudderings thrill the sinking heart,

Whiten the lip, and make the abhorrent eve

Roll back and close, prest in for agony.

10

How then fared he for whom the mighty crowd

Suffer'd in spirit thus, . . how then fared he?

A ghastly smile was on his lip, his eye Glared with a ghastly hope, as he drew nigh,

And cried aloud, Yes, Rajah! it is I!

And wilt thou kill me now?

The countenance of the Almighty Man Fell when he knew Ladurlad, and his brow

Was clouded with despite, as one ashamed.

That wrotch again! indignant he exclaim'd,

claim'd, And smote his forehead, and stood

silently

Awhile in wrath: then, with ferocious smile.

And eyes which seem'd to darken his dark cheek, 160

Let him go free! he cried; he hath his Curse,

And vengeance upon him can wreak no worse . .

But ye who did not stop him.. tremble ye!

11

He bade the archers pile their weapons there:

No manly courage fill'd the slavish band, No sweetening vengeance roused a brave despair.

He call'd his horsemen then, and gave command

To hem the offenders in, and hew them down. [rear'd,

Ten thousand seymitars at once up-Flash up, like waters sparkling to the sun; 170

A second time the fatal brands appear'd Lifted aloft, . . they glitter'd then no more,

Their light was gone, their splendour quench'd in gore.

At noon the massacre begun,

And night closed in before the work of
death was done.

IX. THE HOME-SCENE

1

The steam of slaughter from that place of blood

Spread o'er the tainted sky.

Vultures, for whom the Rajah's tyranny So oft had furnish'd food, from far and nigh

Sped to the lure: a loft with joyful cry, Wheeling around, they hover'd over head;

Or, on the temple perch'd, with greedy eye,

Impatient watch'd the dead.

Far off the tigers, in the inmost wood, Heard the death shriek, and snuff'd the scent of blood:

They rose, and through the covert went their way,

Couch'd at the forest edge, and waited for their prey.

He who had sought for death went wandering on,

The hope which had inspired his heart was gone.

Yet a wild joyance still inflamed his face, A smile of vengeance, a triumphant glow. Where goes he?.. Whither should

Ladurlad go!

Unwittingly the wretch's footsteps trace Their wonted path toward his dwellingplace;

And wandering on, unknowing where, 20
He starts like one surprised at finding
he is there.

3

Behold his lowly home,
By yonder broad-bough'd plane o'ershaded:

There Marriataly's Image stands, And there the garland twined by Kailyal's hands

Around its brow hath faded.

The peacocks, at their master's sight,
Quick from the leafy thatch alight,
And hurry round, and search the ground,
And veer their glancing necks from side
to side,
30

Expecting from his hand
Their daily dole which erst the Maid
supplied,

Now all too long denied.

4

But as he gazed around, How strange did all accustom'd sights appear!

How differently did each familiar sound Assail his alter'd ear!

Here stood the marriage bower, Rear'd in that happy hour

When he, with festal joy and youthful pride, 40

Had brought Yedillian home, his beauteous bride.

Leaves not its own, and many a borrow'd flower,

Had then bedeck'd it, withering ere the night;

But he who look'd from that auspicious day

For years of long delight,

And would not see the marriage bower decay, [care,

There planted and nurst up, with daily
The sweetest herbs that scent the
ambient air.

And train'd them round to live and flourish there.

Nor when dread Yamen's will 50 Had call'd Yedillian from his arms away Ceased he to tend the marriage bower, but still.

Sorrowing, had drest it like a pious rite Due to the monument of past delight.

75

He took his wonted seat before the door, . .

Even as of yore,

When he was wont to view with placid eyes,

His daughter at her evening sacrifice.

Here were the flowers which she so
carefully

Did love to rear for Marriataly's brow; Neglected now, 61

Their heavy heads were drooping, overblown:

All else appear'd the same as heretofore, All . . save himself alone;

How happy then, . . and now a wretch for evermore!

6

The market-flag which hoisted high, From far and nigh,

Above yon cocoa grove is seen, Hangs motionless amid the sultry sky. Loud sounds the village drum; a happy Is there; Ladurlad hears their distant voices,
But with their joy no more his heart rejoices; [fare,

And how their old companion now may Little they know, and less they care; The torment he is doom'd to bear

Was but to them the wonder of a day,
A burthen of sad thoughts soon put
away.

.. –,

7

They knew not that the wretched man was near, [ear,

And yet it seem'd, to his distemper'd
As if they wrong'd him with their merriment.

80

Resentfully he turn'd away his eyes,
Yet turn'd them but to find
Sights that enraged his mind
With envious grief more wild and overpowering.

The tank which fed his fields was there, and there

The large-leaved lotus on the waters flowering.

There, from the intolerable heat The buffaloes retreat;

Only their nostrils raised to meet the air, Amid the sheltering element they rest. Impatient of the sight, he closed his eyes.

And bow'd his burning head, and in despair

Calling on Indra, . . Thunder-God! he said,

Thou owest to me alone this day thy throne,

Be grateful, and in mercy strike me dead.

8

Despair had roused him to that hopeless prayer,

Yet thinking on the heavenly Powers, his mind Drew comfort; and he rose and gather'd flowers.

And twined a crown for Marriataly's brow;

And taking then her wither'd garland down, 100

Replaced it with the blooming coronal.

Not for myself, the unhappy Father

cried,

Not for myself, O Mighty One! I pray, Accursed as I am beyond thy aid! But, oh! be gracious still to that dear Maid

Who crown'd thee with these garlands day by day,

And danced before thee aye at even-tide In beauty and in pride.

O Marriataly, wheresoe er she stray Forlorn and wretched, still be thou her guide! 110

Q

A loud and fiendish laugh replied, Scoffing his prayer. Aloft, as from the air,

The sound of insult came: he look'd, and there

The visage of dead Arvalan came forth, Only his face amid the clear blue sky, Withlong-drawnlips of insolentmockery,

And eyes whose lurid glare Was like a sulphur fire,

Mingling with darkness ere its flames expire.

10

Ladurlad knew him well: enraged to see 120

The cause of all his misery,
He stoop'd and lifted from the ground
A stake, whose fatal point was black
with blood;

The same wherewith his hand had dealt the wound,

When Arvalan, in hour with evil fraught, For violation seized the shricking Maid.

And twice with inefficient wrath essay'd To smite the impassive shade. The lips of scorn their mockery-laugh renew'd. 130 And Arvalan put forth a hand and flight. caught The sunbeam, and condensing there its Upon Ladurlad turn'd the burning stream. Vain cruelty! the stake Fell in white ashes from his hold, but he Endured no added pain: his agony Was full, and at the height; The burning stream of radiance nothing harm'd him: A fire was in his heart and brain. And from all other flame Kehama's Curse had charm'd him. 11 Anon the Spirit waved a second hand; Down rush'd the obedient whirlwind from the sky, Scoop'd up the sand like smoke, and from on high, Shed the hot shower upon Ladurlad's head. there: Where'er he turns, the accursed Hand is East, West, and North, and South, on every side The Hand accursed waves in air to guide The dizzying storm; ears, nostrils, eyes, and mouth It fills and choaks, and clogging every pore, Taught him new torments might be vet in store. Where shall he turn to fly? behold his [bower, house In flames! uprooted lies the marriage-

The Goddess buried by the sandy

shower.

stood.

Thus arm'd, in act again to strike he Blindly, with staggering step, he reels about. And still the accursed Hand pursued. And still the lips of scorn their mockery-

laugh renew'd.

What, Arvalan! hast thou so soon forgot [defv

The grasp of Pollear? Wilt thou still The righteous Powers of heaven? or know'st thou not

That there are yet superior Powers on high. [flight,

Son of the Wicked? . . Lo, in rapid Ereenia hastens from the etherial height, Bright is the sword celestial in his hand; Like lightning in its path athwart the sky.

He comes and drives, with angel-arm, the blow.

Oft have the Asuras, in the wars of Heaven.

Felt that keen sword by arm angelic driven.

And fled before it from the fields of light. Thrice through the vulnerable shade The Glendoveer impels the griding blade,

The wicked Shade flies howling from his

So let that Spirit foul

Fly, and for impotence of anger, howl, Writhing with anguish, and his wounds deplore; fserved.

Worse punishment hath Arvalan de-And righteous Fate hath heavier doom in store.

13

Not now the Glendoveer pursues his flight:

He bade the Ship of Heaven alight, And gently there he laid The astonish'd Father by the happy Maid,

The Maid now shedding tears of deep delight. [eyes, Beholding all things with incredulous

Beholding all things with incredulous Still dizzy with the sand-storm, there

he lay, [Bark

While sailing up the skies, the living Through air and sunshine held its heavenly way.

X. MOUNT MERU

1

Swift through the sky the vessel of the Suras

Sails up the fields of ether like an Angel. Rich is the freight, O Vessel, that thou bearest!

Beauty and Virtue,

Fatherly cares and filial veneration, Hearts which are proved and strengthen'd by affliction,

Manly resentment, fortitude and action, Womanly goodness;

All with which Nature halloweth her daughters.

Tenderness, truth, and purity and meekness,

Piety, patience, faith and resignation, Love and devotement.

Ship of the Gods, how richly art thou laden!

Proud of the charge, thou voyagest rejoicing,

Clouds float around to honour thee, and Evening

Lingers in heaven.

2

A Stream descends on Meru mountain;
None hath seen its secret fountain;
It had its birth, so Sages say,
Upon the memorable day
When Parvati presumed to lay,
In wanton play,

Her hands, too venturous Goddess, in her mirth,

On Seeva's eyes, the light and life of Earth.

Thereat the heart of the Universe stood still:

The Elements ceased their influences; the Hours

Stopt on the eternal round; Motion and Breath,

Time, Change, and Life and Death, In sudden trance opprest, forgot their powers.

A moment, and the dread eclipse was ended; 30

But at the thought of Nature thus suspended,

The sweat on Seeva's forehead stood, And Ganges thence upon the world descended,

The Holy River, the Redeeming Flood.

3

None hath seen its secret fountain;
But on the top of Meru Mountain
Which rises o'er the hills of earth,
In light and clouds, it hath its mortal
hirth.

Earth seems that pinnacle to rear Sublime above this worldly sphere, 40 Its cradle, and its altar, and its throne; And there the new-born River lies Outspread beneath its native skies, As if it there would love to dwell

Alone and unapproachable.

Soon flowing forward, and resign'd

To the will of the Creating Mind,

It springs at once, with sudden leap,

Down from the immeasurable steep.

From rock to rock, with shivering force

rebounding,

50

The mighty cataract rushes; Heaven around,

Like thunder, with the incessant roar resounding,

And Meru's summit shaking with the sound.

Wide spreads the snowy foam, the sparkling spray

Dances aloft; and ever there at morning

The earliest sunbeams haste to wing their way, [adorning; With rainbow wreaths the holy stream And duly the adoring Moon at night Sheds her white glory there,

And in the watery air 60 Suspends her halo-crowns of silver light.

4

A mountain-valley in its blessed breast Receives the stream, which there delights to lie,

Untroubled and at rest
Beneath the untainted sky.

There in a lovely lake it seems to sleep,
And thence through many a channel
dark and deep,

Their secret way the holy Waters wind,
Till, rising underneath the root
Of the Tree of Life on Hemakoot, 70
Majestic forth they flow to purify mankind.

5

Towards this Lake, above the nether sphere,

The living Bark with angel eye
Directs its course along the obedient sky.
Kehama hath not yet dominion here;
And till the dreaded hour,

When Indra by the Rajah shall be driven
Dethroned from Heaven,

Here may Ladurlad rest beyond his power.

6

The living Bark alights; the Glendoveer 80

Then lays Ladurlad by the blessed

Lake;.. [Daughter!
O happy Sire, and yet more happy

The etherial gales his agony aslake,
His daughter's tears are on his cheek,
His hand is in the water;
The innocent man, the man opprest,
Oh joy!.. hath found a place of rest
Beyond Kehama's sway;

The Curse extends not here; his pains have pass'd away.

7

O happy Sire, and happy Daughter! 90 Ye on the banks of that celestial water Your resting place and sanctuary have found.

What! hath not then their mortal taint defiled

The sacred solitary ground? Vain thought! the Holy Valley smiled Receiving such a Sire and Child: Ganges, who seem'd asleep to lie, Beheld them with benignant eye, And rippled round melodiously, And roll'd her little waves, to meet And welcome their beloved feet. 101 The gales of Swerga thither fled, And heavenly odours there were shed About, below, and overhead; And Earth rejoicing in their tread, Hath built them up a blooming Bower, Where every amaranthine flower Its deathless blossom interweaves With bright and undecaying leaves.

Ω

Three happy beings are there here, 110
The Sire, the Maid, the Glendoveer.
A fourth approaches, . . who is this
That enters in the Bower of Bliss?
No form so fair might painter find
Among the daughters of mankind;
For death her beauties hath refined,
And unto her a form hath given
Framed of the elements of Heaven;
Pure dwelling place for perfect mind.
She stood and gazed on Sire and Child;
Her tongue not yet had power to speak,

The tears were streaming down her cheek; 122
And when those tears her sight beguiled,
And still her faltering accents fail'd,
The Spirit, mute and motionless,
Spread out her arms for the caress,
Made still and silent with excess
Of love and painful happiness.

9

The Maid that lovely form survey'd; Wistful she gazed, and knew her not, But Nature to her heart convey'd 131 A sudden thrill, a startling thought, A feeling many a year forgot, Now like a dream anew recurring. As if again in every vein Her mother's milk was stirring, With straining neck and earnest eye She stretch'd her hands imploringly, As if she fain would have her nigh. Yet fear'd to meet the wish'd embrace. At once with love and awe opprest. 141 Not so Ladurlad: he could trace, Though brighten'd with angelic grace, His own Yedillian's earthly face; He ran and held her to his breast! Oh joy above all joys of Heaven, By Death alone to others given, This moment hath to him restored The early-lost, the long-deplored.

w

They sin who tell us Love can die. 150
With life all other passions fly,
All others are but vanity.
In Heaven Ambition cannot dwell,
Nor Avarice in the vaults of Hell;
Earthly these passions of the Earth,
They perish where they have their birth;
But Love is indestructible.
Its holy flame for ever burneth,
From Heaven it came, to Heaven returneth;

Too oft on Earth a troubled guest, 160 At times deceived, at times opprest,

It here is tried and purified,
Then hath in Heaven its perfect rest:
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest time of Love is there.

11

Oh! when a Mother meets on high
The Babe she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then, for pains and fears,
The day of woe, the watchful night,
For all her sorrow, all her tears, 170
An over-payment of delight?

12

A blessed family is this
Assembled in the Bower of Bliss!
Strange woe, Ladurlad, hath been thine,
And pangs beyond all human measure,
And thy reward is now divine.

A foretaste of eternal pleasure. He knew indeed there was a day When all these joys would pass away, And he must quit this blest abode; 180

And, taking up again the spell,
Groan underneath the baleful load,
And wander o'er the world again
Most wretched of the sons of men:
Yet was this brief repose, as when
A traveller in the Arabian sands,
Half-fainting on his sultry road,
Hath reach'd the water-place at last;
And resting there beside the well,
Thinks of the perils he has past, 190
And gazes o'er the unbounded plain,
The plain which must be traversed still,
And drinks,... yet cannot drink his fill;
Then girds his patient loins again.

So to Ladurlad now was given New strength, and confidence in heaven, And hope, and faith invincible.

13

For often would Ereenia tell
Of what in elder days befell,
When other Tyrants in their might,
Usurp'd dominion o'er the earth;
And Veeshnoo took a human birth,

Deliverer of the Sons of men. And slew the huge Ermaccasen, And piece-meal rent, with lion force, Errenen's accursed corse, And humbled Baly in his pride; And when the Giant Ravanen Had borne triumphant from his side Sita, the earth-born God's beloved bride. Then from his island-kingdom, laugh'd to scorn The insulted husband, and his power defied: [hied, How to revenge the wrong in wrath he Bridging the sea before his dreadful way, And met the hundred-headed foc. And dealt him the unerring blow; By Brama's hand the righteous lance was given,

And by that arm immortal driven,
It laid the mighty Tyrant low;
And Earth and Ocean, and high Heaven,
Rejoiced to see his overthrow. 221
Oh! doubt not thou, Yedillian cried,
Such fate Kehama will betide;
For there are Gods who look below, .
Seeva, the Avenger, is not blind,
Nor Veeshnoo careless for mankind.

14

Thus was Ladurlad's soul imbued
With hope and holy fortitude;
And Child and Sire, with pious mind,
Alike resolved, alike resign'd, 230
Look'd onward to the evil day:
Faith was their comfort, Faith their
stay;

They trusted woe would pass away,
And Tyranny would sink subdued,
And Evil yield to Good.

15

Lovely wert thou, O Flower of Earth!
Above all flowers of mortal birth;
But foster'd in this blissful bower,
From day to day, and hour to hour,
Lovelier grew the lovely flower. 240

O blessed, blessed company!
When men and heavenly spirits greet,
And they whom Death had sever'd meet,
And hold again communion sweet;...
O blessed, blessed company!

16

The Sun, careering round the sky,
Beheld them with rejoicing eye,
And bade his willing Charioteer
Relax his speed as they drew near;
Arounin check'd the rainbow reins,
The seven green coursers shook their
manes.

And brighter rays around them threw;
The Car of Glory in their view
More radiant, more resplendent grew;
And Surya', through his veil of light,
Beheld the Bower, and blest the sight.

17

The Lord of Night, as he sail'd by,
Stay'd his pearly boat on high;
And while around the blissful Bower
He bade the softest moonlight flow,
Linger'd to see that earthly flower,
Forgetful of his Dragon foe,
Who, mindful of their ancient feud,
With open jaws of rage pursued.

18

There all good Spirits of the air,
Suras and Devetas repair;
Aloft they love to hover there,
And view the flower of mortal birth
Here for her innocence and worth,
Transplanted from the fields of earth;...
And him, who on the dreadful day

And him, who on the dreadful day
When Heaven was fill'd with consternation. 272

And Indra trembled with dismay, And for the sounds of joy and mirth, Woe was heard and lamentation, Defied the Rajah in his pride,

¹ Surya, the Sun.

Though all in Heaven and Earth beside Stood mute in dolorous expectation; And, rushing forward in that hour, Saved the Swerga from his power. 280 Grateful for this they hover nigh, And bless that blessed Company.

19

One God alone, with wanton eye,
Beheld them in their Bower;
O ye, he cried, who have defied
The Rajah, will ye mock my power?
'Twas Camdeo riding on his lory,
'Twas the immortal Youth of Love;
If men below, and Gods above,
Subject alike, quoth he, have felt these
darts,
290

Shall ye alone, of all in story,
Boast impenetrable hearts?
Hover here, my gentle lory,
Gently hover, while I see
To whom hath Fate decreed the glory,
To the Glendoveer or me.

20

Then in the dewy evening sky,
The bird of gorgeous plumery
Poised his wings and hover'd nigh.
It chanced at that delightful hour
Kailyal sate before the Bower, 301
On the green bank with amaranth sweet,
Where Ganges warbled at her fect.
Ereenia there, before the Maid,
His sails of ocean blue display'd;
And sportive in her sight,
Moved slowly o'er the lake with gliding
flight;

Anon with sudden stroke and strong,
In rapid course careering, swept along;
Now shooting downward from his
heavenly height, 310
Plunged in the deep below,
Then rising, soar'd again,
And shook the sparkling waters off like
rain.

And hovering o'er the silver surface hung. At him young Camdeo bent the bow; With living bees the bow was strung,

The fatal bow of sugar-cane,
And flowers which would inflame the
heart

With their petals barb'd the dart.

21

The shaft, unerringly addrest, 320 Unerring flew, and smote Ereenia's breast.

Ah, Wanton! cried the Glendoveer,
Go aim at idler hearts,
Thy skill is baffled here!
A deeper love I bear that Maid divine,
A love that springeth from a higher will,
A holier power than thine!

99

A second shaft, while thus Ereenia cried, Had Camdeo aim'd at Kailyal's side; But lo! the Bees which strung his bow Broke off, and took their flight. 331 To that sweet Flower of earth they wing

their way,
Around her raven tresses play,
And buzz about her with delight,
As if with that melodious sound,
They strove to pay their willing duty
To mortal purity and beauty.

23

Ah! Wanton! cried the Glendoveer,
No power hast thou for mischief here!
Choose thou some idler breast, 340
For these are proof, by nobler thoughts
possest.

Go, to thy plains of Matra go, And string again thy broken bow!

24

Rightly Ereenia spake; and ill had thoughts

Of earthly love bescem'd the sanctuary Where Kailyal had been wafted, that the Soul Of her dead Mother there might strengthen her, [lore, Feeding her with the milk of heavenly And influxes of Heaven imbue her heart With hope and faith, and holy

fortitude, 350
Against the evil day. Here rest a while
In peace, O father! mark'd for misery
Above all sons of men; O daughter!
doom'd

For sufferings and for trials above all
Of women; .. yet both favour'd,
both beloved [peace

By all good Powers, rest here a while in

XI. THE ENCHANTRESS

1

WHEN from the sword by arm angelic driven.

Foul Arvalan fled howling, wild in pain, His thin essential spirit, rent and riven With wounds, united soon and heal'd again;

Backward the accursed turn'd his eye in flight, [then,

Remindful of revengeful thoughts even
And saw where, gliding through the
evening light,

The Ship of Heaven sail'd upward
through the sky, [sight.
Then, like a meteor, vanish'd from his
Where should he follow? vainly might
he try 10

To trace through trackless air its rapid course,

Nor dared he that angelic arm defy, Still sore and writhing from its dreaded force.

2

Should he the lust of vengeance lay aside?

Too long had Arvalan in ill been train'd; Nurst up in power and tyranny and pride, His soul the ignominious thought disdain'd.

Or to his mighty Father should he go, Complaining of defeature twice sustain'd.

And ask new powers to meet the immortal foe?.. 20

Repulse he fear'd not, but he fear'd rebuke,

And shamed to tell him of his overthrow.

There dwelt a dread Enchantress in
a nook [been,

Obscure; old helpmate she to him had Lending her aid in many a secret sin; And there for counsel now his way he took.

3

She was a woman, whose unlovely youth, Even like a canker'd rose which none will cull,

Had wither'd on the stalk; her heart was full

Of passions which had found no natural scope, 30

Feelings which there had grown but ripen'd not,

Desires unsatisfied, abortive hope, Repinings which provoked vindictive thought:

These restless elements for ever wrought Fermenting in her with perpetual stir, And thus her spirit to all evil moved; She hated men because they loved not

And hated women because they were loved.

And thus, in wrath and hatred and despair,

She tempted Hell to tempt her; and resign'd 40

Her body to the Demons of the Air, Wicked and wanton fiends, who where they will

Wander abroad, still seeking to do ill,

And take whatever vacant form they find. [left. Carcase of man or beast that life hath Foul instrument for them of fouler mind. To these the Witch her wretched body

So they would wreak her vengeance on mankind:

She thus at once their mistress and their slave:

And they to do such service nothing loth,

Obey'd her bidding, slaves and masters both.

So from this cursed intercourse she caught

Contagious power of mischief, and was taught

Such secrets as are damnable to guess. Is there a child whose little lovely ways Might win all hearts, . . on whom his parents gaze Till they shed tears of joy and tender-

Oh! hide him from that Witch's withering sight!

Oh! hide him from the eye of Lorrinite! Her look hath crippling in it, and her

All plagues which on mortality can light; Death is his doom if she behold, . . or worse...

Diseases loathsome and incurable, And inward sufferings that no tongue can tell.

Woe was to him, on whom that eye of hate [Fate. Was bent; for, certain as the stroke of It did its mortal work, nor human arts Could save the unhappy wretch, her chosen prey;

For gazing, she consumed his vital parts,

The wine which from you wounded palm on high

Fills yonder gourd, as slowly it distils, Grows sour at once if Lorrinite pass by. The deadliest worm from which all

creatures fly Fled from the deadlier venom of her eye;

The babe unborn, within its mother's womb.

Started and trembled when the Witch came nigh;

And in the silent chambers of the tomb, Death shudder'd her unholy tread to hear.

And from the dry and mouldering bones did fear

Force a cold sweat, when Lorrinite was near.

Power made her haughty: by ambition fired.

Ere long to mightier mischiefs she aspired.

The Calis, who o'er Cities rule unseen, Each in her own domain a Demon Queen, And there adored with blood and

human life, They knew her, and in their accurst employ

She stirr'd up neighbouring states to mortal strife.

Sani, the dreadful God, who rides abroad Upon the King of the Ravens, to destroy

The offending sons of men, when his four hands

Were weary with their toil, would let her do

His work of vengeance upon guilty lands; And Lorrinite, at his commandment,

When the ripe earthquake should be loosed, and where

Eating his very core of life away. 70 To point its course. And in the baneful

The pregnant seeds of death he bade her strew,

All deadly plagues and pestilence to brew.

The Locusts were her army, and their bands,

Where'er she turn'd her skinny finger, flew. 100

The floods in ruin roll'd at her commands;

And when, in time of drought, the husbandman

Beheld the gather'd rain about to fall, Her breath would drive it to the desert sands, [soil

While in the marshes' parch'd and gaping The rice-roots by the searching Sun were dried,

And in lean groups, assembled at the side

Of the empty tank, the cattle dropt and died; [wide

And Famine, at her bidding, wasted
The wretched land, till, in the public
way,

Promiscuous where the dead and dying lay,

Dogs fed on human bones in the open light of day.

7

Her secret cell the accursed Arvalan, In quest of vengeance, sought, and thus began.

> Mighty mother! mother wise! Revenge me on my enemies.

LORRINITE

Comest thou, son, for aid to me?
Tell me who have injured thee,
Where they are, and who they be:
Of the Earth, or of the Sea, 120
Or of the aërial company?
Earth, nor Sea, nor Air is free
From the powers who wait on me,
And my tremendous witchery.

ARVALAN

She for whom so ill I sped,
Whom my Father deemeth dead,
Lives, for Marriataly's aid
From the water saved the Maid.
In hatred I desire her still,
And in revenge would have my will.
A Deveta with wings of blue,
In a Ship of Heaven on high,
Pilots her along the sky.
Where they voyage thou canst tell,
Mistress of the mighty spell.

R

At this the Witch, through shrivell'd lips and thin,

Sent forth a sound half whistle and half hiss.

Two winged Hands came in,
Armless and bodiless,
Bearing a globe of liquid crystal, set
In frame as diamond bright, yet black
as jet. [night

A thousand eyes were quench'd in endless
To form that magic globe; for Lorrinite
Had, from their sockets, drawn the
liquid sight.

And kneaded it, with re-creating skill,
Into this organ of her mighty will.
Look in yonder orb, she cried,
Tell me what is there descried.

9

ARVALAN

A mountain top, in clouds of light
Enveloped, rises on my sight; 151
Thence a cataract rushes down,
Hung with many a rainbow crown;
Light and clouds conceal its head;
Below, a silver Lake is spread;
Upon its shores a Bower I see,
Fit home for blessed company.
See they come forward, . . one, two,
three, . .

The last a Maiden, . . it is she! 159
The foremost shakes his wings of blue,
'Tis he whose sword even yet I rue;
And in that other one I know
The visage of my deadliest foe.
Mother, let thy magic might
Arm me for the mortal fight;
Helm and shield and mail afford,
Proof against his dreaded sword.
Then will I invade their seat,
Then shall vengeance be complete.

10

LORRINITE

Spirits who obey my will, 170 Hear him, and his wish fulfil! So spake the mighty Witch, nor farther spell

Needed; anon a sound, like smother'd thunder,

Was heard, slow rolling under;
The solid pavement of the cell
Quaked, heaved, and eleft asunder,
And at the feet of Arvalan display'd,
Helmet and mail, and shield and
seymitar, were laid.

11

The Asuras, often put to flight
And scatter'd in the fields of light
By their foes' celestial might, 131
Forged this enchanted armour for the
fight.

'Mid fires intense did they anneal, In mountain furnaces, the quivering steel, [huc,

Till, trembling through each deepening
It settled in a midnight blue;
Last they cast it, to aslake,
In the penal icy lake.

Then they consign'd it to the Giant brood:

And while they forged the impenetrable arms. 190

The Evil Powers, to oversee them, stood, And there imbued

The work of Giant strength with magic charms.

Foul Arvalan, with joy, survey'd
The crescent sabre's cloudy blade,
With deeper joy the impervious mail,
The shield and helmet of avail.
Soon did he himself array,
And bade her speed him on his way.

12

Then she led him to the den, 200
Where her chariot, night and day,
Stood harness'd ready for the way.
Two Dragons, yoked in adamant, convey
The magic car; from either collar
sprung

An adamantine rib, which met in air, O'er-arch'd, and crost and bent diverging there.

And firmly in its arc upbore, Upon their brazen necks, the seat of power.

Arvalan mounts the car, and in his hand Receives the magic reins from Lorrinite; The dragons, long obedient to command,

Their ample sails expand; 212 Like steeds well-broken to fair lady's hand.

They feel the reins of might,
And up the northern sky begin their
flight.

13

Son of the Wicked, doth thy soul delight To think its hour of vengeance now is nigh?

Lo! where the far-off light
Of Indra's palace flashes on his sight,
And Meru's heavenly summit shines on
high.

With clouds of glory bright,
Amid the dark-blue sky.
Already, in his hope, doth he espy,

Himself secure in mail of tenfold charms, Ereenia writhing from the magic blade, The Father sent to bear his Curse, . . the Maid

Resisting vainly in his impious arms.

14

Ah, Sinner! whose anticipating soul Incurs the guilt even when the crime is spared!

Joyous toward Meru's summit on he fared, 230

While the twin Dragons, rising as he guides, [the pole. With steady flight, steer northward for

Anon, with irresistible controul,

Force mightier far than his arrests their

course:

It wrought as though a Power unseen had caught

Their adamantine yokes to drag them on.
Straight on they bend their way, and
now, in vain.

Upward doth Arvalan direct the rein; The rein of magic might avails no more, Bootless its strength against that unseen Power 240

That in their mid career,
Hath seized the Chariot and the
Charioteer.

With hands resisting, and down-pressing feet

Upon their hold insisting, He struggles to maintain his difficult seat.

Seeking in vain with that strange Power to vie,

Their doubled speed the affrighted Dragons try.

Forced in a stream from whence was no retreat.

Strong as they are, behold them whirl'd along,

Headlong, with useless pennons, through the sky. 250 15

What Power was that, which, with resistless might,

Foil'd the dread magic thus of Lorrinite?

'Twas all-commanding Nature . . They were here

Within the sphere of the adamantine rocks

Which gird Mount Meru round, as far below

That heavenly height where Ganges hath its birth

Involved in clouds and light, So far above its roots of ice and snow.

16

On . . on they roll . . rapt headlong they roll on ; . .

The lost canoe, less rapidly than this, Down the precipitous stream is whirl'd along 261

To the brink of Niagara's dread abyss.
On . . on they roll, and now, with
shivering shock.

Are dash'd against the rock that girds the Pole.

Down from his shatter'd mail the unhappy Soul

Is dropt, . . ten thousand thousand fathoms down, . .

Till in an ice-rift, 'mid the eternal snow,
Foul Arvalan is stopt. There let him
howl,

Groan there, . . and there with unavailing moan,

For aid on his Almighty Father call.

17

All human sounds are lost 271
Amid those deserts of perpetual frost,
Old Winter's drear domain,
Beyond the limits of the living World,

Beyond Kehama's reign.

Of utterance and of motion soon bereft, Frozen to the ice-rock, there behold him lie,

Only the painful sense of Being left,
A Spirit who must feel, and cannot die,
Bleaching and bare beneath the polar
sky.
280

XII. THE SACRIFICE COMPLETED

1

O YE who, by the Lake
On Meru Mount, partake
The joys which Heaven hath destined
for the blest,
Swift, swift, the moments fly,
The silent hours go by,
And ye must leave your dear abode of
rest.

O wretched Man, prepare Again thy Curse to bear! Prepare, O wretched Maid, for farther woe!

The fatal hour draws near, when Indra's heavenly sphere
Must own the Tyrant of the World
below.

To-day the hundredth Steed,
At Seeva's shrine must bleed,
The dreadful sacrifice is full to-day;
Nor man nor God hath power,
At this momentous hour,
Again to save the Swerga from his sway.
Fresh woes, O Maid divine,
Fresh trials must be thine: 20
And what must thou, Ladurlad, yet
endure!

But let your hearts be strong,
And rise against all wrong,
For Providence is just, and virtue is
secure.

9

They, little deeming that the fatal day
Was come, beheld where through the
morning sky

A Ship of Heaven drew nigh.

Onward they watch it steer its steady

flight:

Till wondering, they espy 29
Old Casyapa, the Sire of Gods, alight.
But when Ereenia saw the Sire appear,
At that unwonted and unwelcome sight
His heart received a sudden shock of
fear:

Thy presence doth its doleful tidings tell,
O Father! cried the startled Glendoveer,
The dreadful hour is near! I know
it well! [Gods

Not for less import would the Sire of Forsake his ancient and august abodes.

3

Even so, serene the immortal Sire replies; Soon like an earthquake will ye feel the blow 40

Which consummates the mighty sacrifice:

And this World, and its Heaven, and all therein,

Are then Kehama's. To the second ring
Of these seven Spheres, the SwergaKing,

Even now, prepares for flight, Beyond the circle of the conquer'd world, Beyond the Rajah's might.

Ocean, that clips this inmost of the Spheres,

And girds it round with everlasting roar,
Set like a gem appears 50
Within that bending shore.

Thither fly all the Sons of heavenly race:

I too forsake mine ancient dwellingplace. [go:

And now, O Child and Father, ye must Take up the burthen of your woe, And wander once again below. With patient heart hold onward to the end, . .

Be true unto yourselves, and bear in mind [friend; That every God is still the good Man's And when the Wicked have their day assign'd, 60

Then they who suffer bravely save mankind.

4

Oh tell me, cried Ereenia, for from thee Nought can be hidden, when the end will be!

Seek not to know, old Casyapa replied,
What pleaseth Heaven to hide.
Dark is the abyss of Time,
But light enough to guide your steps is
given;

Whatever weal or woe betide,
Turn never from the way of truth aside,
And leave the event, in holy hope, to
Heaven. 70

The moment is at hand, no more delay, Ascend the etherial bark, and go your way;

And Ye, of heavenly nature, follow me.

5

The will of Heaven be done, Ladurlad cried,

Nor more the man replied;
But placed his daughter in the etherial bark,

Then took his seat beside.

There was no word at parting, no adieu.

Down from that empyreal height they
flew:

One groan Ladurlad breathed, yet utter'd not, 80

When, to his heart and brain,
The fiery Curse again like lightning shot.
And now on earth the Sire and Child
alight,

Up soar'd the Ship of Heaven, and sail'd away from sight.

6

O ye immortal Bowers,
Where hitherto the Hours
Have led their dance of happiness for
aye,

With what a sense of woe
Do ye expect the blow,
And see your heavenly dwellers driven
away!

Lo! where the aunnay-birds of graceful mien.

Whose milk-white forms were seen, Lovely as Nymphs, your ancient trees between,

And by your silent springs,
With melancholy cry
Now spread unwilling wings;
Their stately necks reluctant they
protend,

And through the sullen sky,
To other worlds, their mournful progress
bend.

7

The affrighted gales to-day 100 O'er their beloved streams no longer play,

The streams of Paradise have ceased to flow:

The Fountain-Tree withholds its diamond shower,

In this portentous hour. . . This dolorous hour, . . this universal

Where is the Palace, whose far-flashing beams,

With streaks and streams of evervarying light,

Brighten'd the polar night Around the frozen North's extremest shore?

A star that shoots and falls, and then is seen no more.

Now! now!.. Before the Golden Palaces,

The Bramin strikes the inevitable hour.

The fatal blow is given,

That over Earth and Heaven Confirms the Almighty Rajah in his

power.

All evil Spirits then, That roam the World about, Or wander through the sky,

Set up a joyful shout. 120
The Asuras and the Giants join the cry;
The damn'd in Padalon acclaim

Their hoped Deliverer's name; Heaven trembles with the thunderdrowning sound;

Back starts affrighted Ocean from the shore, [floor

And the adamantine vaults and brazen Of Hell are shaken with the roar.

Up rose the Rajah through the conquer'd sky,

To seize the Swerga for his proud abode; Myriads of evil Genii round him fly, 130 As royally on wings of winds he rode, And scaled high Heaven, triumphant like a God.

XIII. THE RETREAT

1

Around her Father's neck the Maiden lock'd

Her arms, when that portentous blow was given; [uproar,

Clinging to him she heard the dread And felt the shuddering shock which ran through Heaven;

Earth underneath them rock'd, Her strong foundations heaving in commotion.

Such as wild winds upraise in raving Ocean,

As though the solid base were rent asunder. [sky,

And lo! where, storming the astonish'd Kehama and his evil host ascend! ro Before them rolls the thunder,

Ten thousand thousand lightnings round them fly,

Upward the lengthening pageantries aspire,

Leaving from Earth to Heaven a widening wake of fire.

2

When the wild uproar was at length allay'd,

And Earth recovering from the shock was still,

Thus to her father spake the imploring Maid: [borne

Oh! by the love which we so long have Each other, and we ne'er shall cease to bear...

Oh! by the sufferings we have shared,
And must not cease to share, . . 21
One boon I supplicate in this dread hour,
One consolation in this hour of woe!

Father, thou hast it in thy power,
Thou wilt not, Father, sure refuse me
now [know.

The only comfort my poor heart can

3

O dearest, dearest Kailyal! with a smile

Of tenderness and anguish, he replied,
O best beloved, and to be loved the best,
Best worthy, . . set thy duteous heart
at rest. 30

I know thy wish, and let what will betide,

Ne'er will I leave thee wilfully again.

My soul is strengthen'd to endure its
pain; [guide;

Be thou in all my wanderings, still my Be thou, in all my sufferings, at my side.

The Maiden, at those welcome words, imprest

A passionate kiss upon her father's cheek! **fseek**

They look'd around them then as if to Where they should turn, North, South, or East, or West,

Wherever to their vagrant feet seem'd best.

But, turning from the view her mournful feries. eves.

Oh, whither should we wander, Kailyal Or wherefore seek in vain a place of rest? Have we not here the Earth beneath our tread.

Heaven overhead.

A brook that winds through this sequester'd glade.

And yonder woods, to yield us fruit and shade?

The little all our wants require is nigh; Hope we have none; . . why travel on in fear?

We cannot fly from Fate, and Fate will find us here. 50

'Twas a fair scene wherein they stood, A green and sunny glade amid the wood, And in the midst an aged Banian grew.

It was a goodly sight to see That venerable tree.

For o'er the lawn, irregularly spread, Fifty straight columns propt its lofty head:

And many a long depending shoot, Seeking to strike its root,

Straight like a plummet, grew towards the ground.

Some on the lower boughs which crost their way,

Fixing their bearded fibres, round and round. [wound; With many a ring and wild contortion Flap on the twinkling waters, up and

Some to the passing wind at times, with sway

Of gentle motion swung:

Others of younger growth, unmoved. were hung

Like stone-drops from the cavern's fretted height;

Beneath was smooth and fair to sight. Nor weeds nor briars deform'd the natural floor

And through the leafy cope which bower'd it o'er

Came gleams of chequer'd light. So like a temple did it seem, that there A pious heart's first impulse would be prayer.

6

A brook, with easy current, murmur'd near:

Water so cool and clear The peasants drink not from the humble Which they with sacrifice of rural pride, Have wedded to the cocoa-grove beside: Nor tanks of costliest masonry dispense

To those in towns who dwell. The work of Kings, in their beneficence. Fed by perpetual springs, a small lagoon, Pellucid, deep and still, in silence join'd And swell'd the passing stream. Like burnish'd steel

Glowing, it lay beneath the eye of noon; And when the breezes in their play, Ruffled the darkening surface, then with gleam

Of sudden light, around the lotus stem It rippled, and the sacred flowers that

The lakelet with their roseate beauty,

In easy waving rock'd, from side to side; And as the wind upheaves

Their broad and buoyant weight, the glossy leaves [down.

They built them here a bower, of jointed cane, [long Strong for the needful use, and light and Was the slight framework rear'd, with little pain; [supply, Lithe creepers, then, the wicker sides And the tall jungle-grass fit roofing gave Beneath the genial sky. 100 And here did Kailyal, each returning

And here did Kailyal, each returning day, [pay

Pour forth libations from the brook to The Spirits of her Sires their grateful rite; In such libations pour'd in open

glades,

Beside clear streams and solitary shades, The Spirits of the virtuous dead delight. And duly here, to Marriataly's praise, The Maid, as with an angel's voice of song,

Poured her melodious lays
Upon the gales of even, 110
And gliding in religious dance along,
Moved graceful as the dark-eyed Nymphs
of Heaven,

Such harmony to all her steps was given.

Q

Thus ever, in her Father's doating eye, Kailyal perform'd the customary rite; He, patient of his burning pain the while,

Beheld her, and approved her pious toil; And sometimes at the sight

A melancholy smile
Would gleam upon his aweful countenance.

He too by day and night, and every hour.

Paid to a higher Power his sacrifice; An offering, not of ghee, or fruit, and rice.

Flower-crown, or blood; but of a heart subdued,

A resolute, unconquer'd fortitude.

An agony represt, a will resign'd, To her, who, on her secret throne reclined,

Amid the Sea of Milk, by Veeshnoo's side, Looks with an eye of mercy on mankind.

By the Preserver, with his power endued, 130

There Voomdavee beholds this lower clime, [good,

And marks the silent sufferings of the To recompense them in her own good time.

9

O force of faith! O strength of virtuous will!

Behold him in his endless martyrdom, Triumphant still!

The Curse still burning in his heart and brain,

And yet doth he remain
Patient the while, and tranquil, and
content!

The pious soul hath framed unto itself A second nature, to exist in pain 141 As in its own allotted element.

10

Such strength the will reveal'd had given
This holy pair, such influxes of grace,
That to their solitary resting place
They brought the peace of Heaven.
Yea, all around was hallow'd! Danger,

Fear,
Nor thought of evil ever enter'd here.
A charm was on the Leopard when he

Within the circle of that mystic glade; Submiss he crouch'd before the heavenly maid.

And offer'd to her touch his speckled side: [head.

Or with arch'd back erect, and bending And eyes half-closed for pleasure, would he stand.

Courting the pressure of her gentle hand

Trampling his path through wood and brake,

And canes which crackling fall before his way, [play

And tassel-grass, whose silvery feathers O'ertopping the young trees.

On comes the Elephant, to slake 160 His thirst at noon in yon pellucid springs. Lo! from his trunk upturn'd, aloft he flings

The grateful shower; and now Plucking the broad-leaved bough Of yonder plane, with wavey motion slow.

> Fanning the languid air, He moves it to and fro.

But when that form of beauty meets his sight.

The trunk its undulating motion stops, From his forgetful hold the plane-branch drops, 170

Reverent he kneels, and lifts his rational eves

To her as if in prayer;

And when she pours her angel voice in song, [notes,

Entranced he listens to the thrilling Till his strong temples, bathed with sudden dews,

Their fragrance of delight and love diffuse.

12

Lo! as the voice melodious floats around,

The Antelope draws near,
The Tigress leaves her toothless cubs to
hear:

The Snake comes gliding from the secret brake. 180

Himself in fascination forced along
By that enchanting song;
The antic Monkies, whose wild gambols
late.

When not a breeze waved the tall jungle grass,

Shook the whole wood, are hush'd, and silently

Hang on the cluster'd tree.
All things in wonder and delight are still;
Only at times the Nightingale is heard,
Not that in emulous skill that sweetest
bird

Her rival strain would try, 290
A mighty songster, with the Maid to vie;
She only bore her part in powerful sympathy.

13

Well might they thus adore that heavenly Maid!

For never Nymph of Mountain, Or Grove, or Lake, or Fountain, With a diviner presence fill'd the shade.

> No idle ornaments deface Her natural grace,

Musk-spot, nor sandal-streak, nor scarlet stain.

Ear-drop nor chain, nor arm nor ankle-ring, 200

Nor trinketry on front, or neck, or breast Marring the perfect form: she seem'd a thing

Of Heaven's prime uncorrupted work,

Of early nature undefiled,

A daughter of the years of innocence.

And therefore all things loved her. When
she stood

Beside the glassy pool, the fish, that flies Quick as an arrow from all other eyes, Hover'd to gaze on her. The mother bird,

When Kailyal's step she heard, 210 Sought not to tempt her from her secret nest,

But hastening to the dear retreat, would fly

To meet and welcome her benignant eye.

Hope we have none, said Kailyal to her Sire. [Maid

Said she aright? and had the mortal No thoughts of heavenly aid, . .

No secret hopes her inmost heart to move [desire,

With longings of such deep and pure As Vestal Maids, whose piety is love, Feel in their ecstasies, when rapt above, Their souls unto their heavenly Spouse aspire?

Why else so often doth that searching

Roam through the scope of sky?
Why, if she sees a distant speck on high,
Starts there that quick suffusion to her
check?

'Tis but the Eagle in his heavenly height; Reluctant to believe, she hears his cry, And marks his wheeling flight.

Then pensively averts her mournful sight.

Why ever else, at morn, that waking sigh, 230

Because the lovely form no more is nigh Which hath been present to her soul all night:

And that injurious fear
Which ever, as it riseth, is represt,
Yet riseth still within her troubled
breast, [veer!
That she no more shall see the Glendo-

15

Hath he forgotten me? The wrongful thought

Would stir within her, and though still repell'd

With shame and self-reproaches, would recur.

Days after days unvarying come and go,
And neither friend nor foe 241
Approaches them in their sequester'd
bower.

Maid of strange destiny! but think not thou

Thou art forgotten now,

And hast no cause for farther hope or fear:

High-fated Maid, thou dost not know What eyes watch over thee for weal and

Even at this hour.

Searching the dark decrees divine, Kehama, in the fulness of his power, Perceives his thread of fate entwine with thine. 251

The Glendoveer, from his far sphere, With love that never sleeps, beholds thee here,

And in the hour permitted will be near.

Dark Lorrinite on thee hath fix'd her sight,

And laid her wiles, to aid

Foul Arvalan when he shall next appear;

For well she ween'd his Spirit would

renew [hate;

Old vengeance now, with unremitting
The Enchantress well that evil nature
knew, 260

The accursed Spirit hath his prey in view:

And thus, while all their separate hopes pursue, All work, unconsciously, the will of Fate.

16

Fate work'd its own the while. A band Of Yoguees, as they roam'd the land Seeking a spouse for Jaga-Naut their God,

Stray'd to this solitary glade, And reach'd the bower wherein the Maid abode.

Wondering at form so fair, they deem'd the Power

Divine had led them to his chosen bride,
And seized and bore her from her
Father's side. 271

7
Such was the talk they held upon their

way,

Of him to whose old City they were bound; [day

And now, upon their journey, many a
Had risen and closed, and many a
week gone round,

And many a realm and region had they pass'd,

When now the Ancient Towers appear'd at last.

8

Their golden summits in the noon-day light,

Shone o'er the dark green deep that roll'd between,

For domes, and pinnacles, and spires were seen

Peering above the sea, . . a mournful sight!

Well might the sad beholder ween from thence

What works of wonder the devouring wave

Had swallow'd there, when monuments so brave

Bore record of their old magnificence.

And on the sandy shore, beside the
verge

Of Ocean, here and there, a rock-hewn

Resisted in its strength the surf and surge

That on their deep foundations beat in vain.

In solitude the Ancient Temples stood, Once resonant with instrument and song,

And solemn dance of festive multitude;
Now as the weary ages pass along,
Hearing no voice save of the Ocean flood,

Hearing no voice save of the Ocean flood Which roars for ever on the restless shores: Or, visiting their solitary caves,
The lonely sound of winds, that mean
around 130

Accordant to the melancholy waves.

9

With reverence did the travellers see
The works of ancient days, and silently
Approach the shore. Now on the
yellow sand,

Where round their feet the rising surges part,

They stand. Ladurlad's heart Exulted in his wondrous destiny.

To Heaven he raised his hand In attitude of stern heroic pride;

Oh what a power, he cried, 140
Thou dreadful Rajah, doth thy curse impart!

I thank thee now!.. Then turning to the Maid,

Thou seest how far and wide Yon Towers extend, he said, My search must needs be long. Mean-

time the flood
Will cast thee up thy food, . .

And in the Chambers of the Rock by night,

Take thou thy safe abode. No prowling beast to harm thee, or

affright, Can enter there; but wrap thyself with

with care 150

From the foul Birds obscene that thirst for blood;

For in such caverns doth the Bat delight To have its haunts. Do thou with stone and shout,

Ere thou liest down at evening, scare them out,

And in this robe of mine involve thy feet.

Duly commend us both to Heaven in prayer, [sweet! Be of good heart, and may thy sleep be

So saying, he put back his arm, and gave The cloth which girt his loins, and press'd her hand

With fervent love, then from the sand Advanced into the sea; the coming Wave 161

Which knew Kehama's curse, before his way

Started, and on he went as on dry land, And still around his path the waters parted.

She stands upon the shore, where scaweeds play,

Lashing her polish'd ankles, and the spray [fled, Which off her Father, like a rainbow, Falls on her like a shower; there Kailyal stands.

And sees the billows rise above his head. She at the startling sight forgot the

power 170
The Curse had given him, and held forth
her hands

Imploringly, . . her voice was on the wind.

And the deaf Ocean o'er Ladurlad closed.

Soon she recall'd his destiny to mind,
And shaking off that natural fear,
composed

Her soul with prayer, to wait the event resign'd.

11

Alone, upon the solitary strand,
The lovely one is left; behold her go,
Pacing with patient footsteps, to and fro,
Along the bending sand. 180
Save her, ye Gods! from Evil Powers,
and here

From man she need not fear:
For never Traveller comes near
These aweful ruins of the days of yore,
Nor fisher's bark, nor venturous mariner,
Approach the sacred shore.

All day, she walk'd the beach, at night she sought

The Chamber of the Rock; with stone and shout

Assail'd the Bats obscene, and scared them out;

Then in her Father's robe involved her feet, 190

And wrapt her mantle round to guard her head,

And laid her down; the rock was Kailyal's bed, [sky, Her chamber-lamps were in the starry

The winds and waters were her lullaby.

12

Be of good heart, and may thy sleep be sweet,

Ladurlad said:.. Alas! that cannot be To one whose days are days of misery. How often did she stretch her hands to greet

Ercenia, rescued in the dreams of night!

How oft amid the vision of delight,
Fear in her heart all is not as it seems;
Then from unsettled slumber start, and

The Winds that moan above, the Waves below!

Thou hast been call'd, O Sleep! the friend of Woe, [so

But 'tis the happy who have call'd thee

13

Another day, another night are gone, A second passes, and a third wanes on. So long she paced the shore,

So often on the beach she took her stand, That the wild Sea-Birds knew her, and no more

Fled, when she pass'd beside them on the strand. Slight

Bright shine the golden summits in the Of the noon-sun, and lovelier far by night [shed:

Their moonlight glories o'er the sea they

Fair is the dark-green deep: by night and day

Unvex'd with storms, the peaceful billows play,

As when they closed above Ladurlad's head;

The firmament above is bright and clear; The sea-fowl, lords of water, air, and land,

Joyous alike upon the wing appear,
()r when they ride the waves, or walk
the sand;
221

Beauty and light and joy are every where:

There is no sadness and no sorrow here, Save what that single human breast contains.

But oh! what hopes, and fears, and pains are there!

14

Seven miserable days the expectant Maid,

From earliest dawn till evening, watch'd the shore;

Hope left her then; and in her heart she said, [more. Never should she behold her Father

XVI. THE ANCIENT SEPULCHRES

1

When the broad Ocean on Ladurlad's head

Had closed and arch'd him o'er,
With steady tread he held his way
Adown the sloping shore.
The dark green waves with emerald hue,

Imbue the beams of day,
And on the wrinkled sand below,
Rolling their mazy network to and fro,
Light shadows shift and play.

The hungry Shark, at scent of prey,

Toward Ladurlad darted;
Beholding then that human form erect,
How like a God the depths he trod,
Appall'd the monster started,
And in his fear departed.
Onward Ladurlad went with heart elate,
And now hath reach'd the Ancient
City's gate.

9

Wondering he stood awhile to gaze
Upon the works of elder days.
The brazen portals open stood,
Even as the fearful multitude
Had left them, when they fled
Before the rising flood.
High over-head, sublime,

The mighty gateway's storied roof was spread,

Dwarfing the puny piles of younger time.

With the deeds of days of yore

That ample roof was sculptured o'er,

And many a godlike form there met his

his eye,

And many an emblem dark of mystery.

Through these wide portals oft had
Baly rode 3r

Triumphant from his proud abode,
When, in his greatness, he bestrode
The Aullay, hugest of four-footed kind,
The Aullay-Horse, that in his force,
With elephantine trunk, could bind
And lift the elephant, and on the wind

And lift the elephant, and on the wind Whirl him away, with sway and swing, Even like a pebble from the practised sling.

3

Those streets which never, since the days of yore,

By human footstep had been visited,
Those streets which never more
A human foot shall tread,

Ladurlad trod. In sun-light and sea-

The thousand Palaces were seen

Of that proud City, whose superb abodes Seem'd rear'd by Giants for the immortal Gods. [stand,

How silent and how beautiful they Like things of Nature! the eternal rocks

Themselves not firmer. Neither hath the sand 50

Drifted within their gates and choak'd their doors,

Nor slime defiled their pavements and their floors.

Did then the Ocean wage
His war for love and envy, not in rage,
O thou fair City, that he spared thee
thus?

Art thou Varounin's capital and court,
Where all the Sea-Gods for delight
resort,

A place too godlike to be held by us, The poor degenerate children of the Earth?

So thought Ladurlad, as he look'd around, 60

Weening to hear the sound Of Mermaid's shell, and song Of choral throng from some imperial hall.

Wherein the Immortal Powers at festival,

Their high carousals keep;
But all is silence dread,
Silence profound and dead,
The everlasting stillness of the Deep.

4

Through many a solitary street, And silent market-place, and lonely square,

Arm'd with the mighty Curse, behold him fare. [fane

And now his feet attain that royal Where Baly held of old his aweful reign. What once had been the Gardens spread around, Fair Gardens, once which wore perpetual green,

Where all sweet flowers through all the year were found,

And all fair fruits were through all seasons seen;

A place of Paradise, where each device Of emulous Art with Nature strove tovie;

And Nature on her part, 80 Call'd forth new powers wherewith to vanquish Art. [eye,

The Swerga-God himself, with envious Survey'd those peerless gardens in their prime:

Nor ever did the Lord of Light, Who circles Earth and Heaven upon his way, [sight

Behold from eldest time a goodlier Than were the groves which Baly, in his might,

Made for his chosen place of solace and delight.

5

It was a Garden still beyond all price, Even yet it was a place of Paradise; For where the mighty Ocean could not spare,

There had he with his own creation, Sought to repair his work of devastation.

And here were coral bowers,
And grots of madrepores,
And banks of sponge, as soft and fair to
eye

As e'er was mossy bed Whereon the Wood Nymphs lie With languid limbs in summer's sultry hours.

Here too were living flowers 100 Which, like a bud compacted, Their purple cups contracted, And now in open blossom spread, Stretch'd like green anthers many a seeking head.

And arborets of jointed stone were there,

And plants of fibres fine, as silkworm's thread; [hair

Yea, beautiful as Mermaid's golden Upon the waves dispread.

Others that, like the broad banana growing.

Raised their long wrinkled leaves of purple hue, 110

Like streamers wide out-flowing.

And whatsoe'er the depths of Ocean hide

From human eyes, Ladurlad there espied,

Trees of the deep, and shrubs and fruits and flowers,

As fair as ours,

Wherewith the Sea-Nymphs love their locks to braid,

When to their father's hall, at festival Repairing they, in emulous array, Their charms display,

To grace the banquet, and the solemn day.

6

The golden fountains had not ceased to flow:

And where they mingled with the briny Sea,

There was a sight of wonder and delight,

To see the fish, like birds in air, Above Ladurlad flying.

Round those strange waters they repair, Their scarlet fins outspread and plying. They float with gentle hovering there;

And now upon those little wings,
As if to dare forbidden things, 130

As if to dare forbidden things, 13
With wilful purpose bent,
Swift as an arrow from a how

Swift as an arrow from a bow, They shoot across, and to and fro, In rapid glance, like lightning go Through that unwonted element. 7

Almost in scenes so wondrous fair, Ladurlad had forgot

The mighty cause which led him there; His busy eye was every where,

His mind had lost all thought; 140
His heart, surrender'd to the joys

Of sight, was happy as a boy's. But soon the awakening thought

recurs

Of him who in the Sepulchres, Hopeless of human aid, in chains is laid;

And her who on the solitary shore, By night and day her weary watch will keep,

Till she shall see them issuing from the deep.

8

Now hath Ladurlad reach'd the Court Of the great Palace of the King; its floor 150

Was of the marble rock; and there before

The imperial door,

A mighty Image on the steps was seen,

Of stature huge, of countenance serene.

A crown and sceptre at his feet were
laid;

One hand a scroll display'd,

The other pointed there, that all might

see:

My name is Death, it said,
In mercy have the Gods appointed me.
Two brazen gates beneath him night
and day
150

Stood open; and within them you behold

Descending steps, which in the living stone

Were hewn, a spacious way

Down to the Chambers of the Kings

of old.

Trembling with hope, the adventurous man descended.

The sea-green light of day
Not far along the vault extended;
But where the slant reflection ended,
Another light was seen
Of red and fiery hue,
170

That with the water blended,
And gave the secrets of the Tombs to
view.

10

Deep in the marble rock, the Hall Of Death was hollow'd out, a chamber wide,

Low-roof'd, and long; on either side,
Each in his own alcove, and on his
throne, [hand

The Kings of old were seated: in his

Each held the sceptre of command,

From whence, across that scene of

endless night,

A carbuncle diffused its everlasting light. 180

11

So well had the embalmers done their part [imbue With spice and precious unguents to The perfect corpse, that each had still the hue

Of living man, and every limb was still Supple and firm and full, as when of yore

Its motion answer'd to the moving will.

The robes of royalty which once they wore,

Wore,
Long since had moulder'd off and left
them bare: [there,
Naked upon their thrones behold them
Statues of actual flesh, . . a fearful
sight! 190

Their large and rayless eyes Dimly reflecting to that gem-born light, Glazed, fix'd, and meaningless, . . yet, open wide,

Their ghastly balls belied The mockery of life in all beside.

1:

But if amid these chambers drear,

Death were a sight of shuddering and

of fear,

Life was a thing of stranger horror here.

For at the farther end, in you alcove, Where Baly should have lain, had he obey'd 200

Man's common lot, behold Ereenia laid.

Strong fetters link him to the rock;

his eye

Now rolls and widens, as with effort vain

He strives to break the chain,
Now seems to brood upon his misery.
Before him couch'd there lay
One of the mighty monsters of the
deep,

Whom Lorrinite encountering on the way.

There station'd, his perpetual guard to keep;

In the sport of wanton power, she charm'd him there, 210
As if to mock the Glendoveer's despair.

13

Upward his form was human, save that here

The skin was cover'd o'er with scale on scale

Compact, a panoply of natural mail.

His mouth, from ear to ear,

Weapon'd with triple teeth, extended

wide.

And tusks on either side;
A double snake below, he roll'd
His supple length behind in many
a sinuous fold.

With red and kindling eye, the Beast beholds 220

A living man draw nigh, And rising on his folds,

In hungry joy awaits the expected feast,

His mouth half-open, and his teeth unsheath'd. [arms

Then on he sprung, and in his scaly Seized him, and fasten'd on his neck, to suck.

With greedy lips the warm life-blood: and sure [charms,

But for the mighty power of magic As easily as, in the blithesome hour Of spring, a child doth crop the meadow-flower.

Piecemeal those claws

Had rent their victim, and those armed jaws [stood,

Snapt him in twain. Naked Ladurlad Yet fearless and unharm'd in this dread strife.

So well Kehama's Curse had charm'd his fated life.

15

He too, . . for anger, rising at the sight

Of him he sought, in such strange thrall confined,

With desperate courage fired Ladur-lad's mind, . .

He too unto the fight himself addrest, And grappling breast to breast, 240 With foot firm-planted stands,

And seized the monster's throat with both his hands.

Vainly, with throttling grasp, he prest The impenetrable scales;

And lo! the Guard rose up, and round his foe.

With gliding motion, wreath'd his lengthening coils,

Then tighten'd all their folds with stress and strain.

Nought would the raging Tiger's strength avail [toils;
If once involved within those mighty

The arm'd Rhinoceros, so clasp'd, in

Had trusted to his hide of rugged mail.

His bones all broken, and the breath

of life

Crush'd from the lungs, in that unequal strife. [break

Again, and yet again, he sought to The impassive limbs; but when the Monster found

His utmost power was vain,
A moment he relax'd in every round,
Then knit his coils again with closer
strain,

And, bearing forward, forced him to the ground.

16

Ereenia groan'd in anguish at the sight Of this dread fight: once more the Glendoveer 261

Essay'd to break his bonds, and fear For that brave father who had sought him here,

Stung him to wilder strugglings. From the rock

He raised himself half-up, with might and main

Pluck'd at the adamantine chain, And now with long and unrelaxing strain,

In obstinate effort of indignant strength,
Labour'd and strove in vain;
Till his immortal sinews fail'd at length;

And yielding, with an inward groan, to fate.

Despairingly, he let himself again Fall prostrate on his prison-bed of stone, [weight.

Body and chain alike with lifeless

Struggling they lay in mortal fray All day, while day was in our upper sphere,

For light of day

And natural darkness never entered here:

All night, with unabated might,
They waged the unremitting fight.
A second day, a second night, 281
With furious will they wrestled still.

The third came on, the fourth is gone;
Another comes, another goes,

And yet no respite, no repose!

But day and night, and night and day,
Involv'd in mortal strife they lay;
Six days and nights have pass'd

away,

And still they wage, with mutual rage,
The unremitting fray. 290
With mutual rage their war they wage,

But not with mutual will;

For when the seventh morning came,

The monster's worn and wearied frame In this strange contest fails; And weaker, weaker, every hour, He yields beneath strong Nature's

power,
For now the Curse prevails.

10

Sometimes the Beast sprung up to bear His foe aloft; and trusting there 300 To shake him from his hold, Belev'd the rings that wreath'd him

Relax'd the rings that wreath'd him round;

But on his throat Ladurlad hung And weigh'd him to the ground; And if they sink, or if they float, Alike with stubborn clasp he clung,

Tenacious of his grasp;
For well he knew with what a power,

Exempt from Nature's laws, 309 The Curse had arm'd him for this hour; And in the monster's gasping jaws, And in his hollow eye,
Well could Ladurlad now descry
The certain signs of victory.

10

And now the Beast no more can keep His painful watch; his eyes, opprest, Are fainting for their natural sleep; His living flesh and blood must rest, The Beast must sleep or die.

Then he, full faint and languidly, 320 Unwreathes his rings and strives to fly,

And still retreating, slowly trails His stiff and heavy length of scales.

But that unweariable foe,
With will relentless follows still:

No breathing time, no pause of fight He gives, but presses on his flight; Along the vaulted chambers, and the

Up to the emerald-tinted light of day, He harasses his way, 330

Till lifeless, underneath his grasp, The huge Sea-Monster lay.

20

That obstinate work is done; Ladurlad cried,

One labour yet remains! And thoughtfully he eyed Ereenia's ponderous chains;

And with faint effort, half-despairing, tried

The rivets deep in-driven. Instinctively,

As if in search of aid, he look'd around:

Oh, then how gladly, in the near
alcove,

340

Fallen on the ground its lifeless Lord beside,

The crescent scymitar he spied, Whose cloudy blade, with potent spells imbued.

Had lain so many an age unhurt in solitude.

Joyfully springing there
He seized the weapon, and with eager
stroke
Hew'd at the chain; the force was

dealt in vain,

For not as if through yielding air Pass'd the descending seymitar,

Its deaden'd way the heavy water broke:

Yet it bit deep. Again, with both his hands.

He wields the blade, and dealt a surer

The baser metal yields

To that fine edge, and lo! the

Glendoveer

Rises and snaps the half-sever'd links, and stands

Freed from his broken bands.

XVII. BALY

1

This is the appointed night,
The night of joy and consecrated mirth,
When from his judgement-seat in
Padalon,

By Yamen's throne,
Baly goes forth, that he may walk the
Earth

Unseen, and hear his name Still hymn'd and honour'd by the grateful voice

Of humankind, and in his fame rejoice.
Therefore from door to door, and

street to street, With willing feet,

10

Shaking their firebrands, the glad children run;

Baly! great Baly! they acclaim, Where'er they run they bear the mighty name. Where'er they meet,

Baly! great Baly! still their choral tongues repeat.

Therefore at every door the votive flame

Through pendant lanterns sheds its painted light,

And rockets hissing upward through the sky,

Fall like a shower of stars
From Heaven's black canopy.
Therefore, on yonder mountain's templed height,

The brazen caldron blazes through the night.

. Huge as a Ship that travels the main sea

Is that capacious brass; its wick as tall As is the mast of some great admiral.

Ten thousand votaries bring Camphor and ghee to feed the sacred flame;

And while, through regions round, the nations see

Its fiery pillar curling high in heaven,
Baly! great Baly! they exclaim, 30
For ever hallowed be his blessed name!
Honour and praise to him for ever
more be given!

2

Why art not thou among the festive throng,

Baly, O righteous Judge! to hear thy fame?

Still, as of yore, with pageantry and song,

The glowing streets along,
They celebrate thy name;
Baly! great Baly! still
he greateful habitants of Fartl

The grateful habitants of Earth acclaim,

Baly! great Baly! still 40
The ringing walls and echoing towers proclaim.

From yonder mountain the portentous flame

Still blazes to the nations as before; All things appear to human eyes the same,

As perfect as of yore;
To human eyes, . . but how unlike to
thine!

Thine which were wont to see The Company divine,

That with their presence came to honour thee!

For all the blessed ones of mortal birth
Who have been clothed with immortality,

51

From the eight corners of the Earth,
From the Seven Worlds assembling, all
Wont to attend thy solemn festival.
Then did thine eyes behold
The wide air peopled with that glorious
train:

Now may'st thou seek the blessed ones in vain,

For Earth and Air are now beneath the Rajah's reign.

ð

Therefore the righteous Judge hath
walk'd the Earth
In sorrow and in solitude to-night. 60
The sound of human mirth
To him is no delight;

He turns away from that ungrateful sight,

Hallowed not now by visitants divine,
And there he bends his melancholy
way

Where, in yon full-orb'd Moon's refulgent light,

The Golden Towers of his old City shine

Above the silver sea. The ancient Chief
There bent his way in grief,
As if sad thoughts indulged would
work their own relief.

4

There he beholds upon the sand
A lovely Maiden in the moonlight stand.
The land-breeze lifts her locks of jet,
The waves around her polish'd ankles
play,

Her bosom with the salt sea-spray is wet;

Her arms are cross'd, unconsciously, to fold

That bosom from the cold, While statue-like she seems her watch to keep,

Gazing intently on the restless deep.

5

Seven miserable days had Kailyal there, 80

From earliest dawn till evening watch'd the deep;

Six nights within the chamber of the rock,

Had laid her down, and found in prayer

That comfort which she sought in vain from sleep.

But when the seventh night came, Never should she behold her father more.

The wretched Maiden said in her despair;

Yet would not quit the shore,

Nor turn her eyes one moment from
the sea;

Never before 90
Had Kailyal watch'd it so impatiently,
Never so eagerly had hoped before,
As now when she believed, and said all

hope was o'er.

6

Beholding her, how beautiful she stood,
In that wild solitude,
Baly from his invisibility
Had issued then, to know her cause
of woe;

But that in the air beside her, he espied Two Powers of Evil for her hurt allied, Foul Arvalan and dreadful Lorrinite. Walking in darkness him they could not

And marking with what demon-like delight

They kept their innocent prey in sight,
He waits, expecting what the end
may be.

7

She starts; for lo! where floating many a rood,

A Monster, hugest of the Ocean brood, Weltering and lifeless, drifts toward the shore.

Backward she starts in fear before the flood,

And, when the waves retreat,

They leave their hideous burthen at
her feet.

8

She ventures to approach with timid tread.

She starts, and half draws back in fear.

Then stops, and stretches out her head.

To see if that huge Beast indeed be dead.

Now growing bold, the Maid advances near.

Even to the margin of the ocean-flood.

Rightly she reads her Father's victory,
And lifts her joyous hands exultingly
To Heaven in gratitude.

Then spreading them toward the Sea, While pious tears bedim her streaming eyes,

Come! come! my Father, come to me, Ereenia, come! she cries,

Lo! from the opening deep they rise, And to Ladurlad's arms the happy Kailyal flies. 9

She turn'd from him, to meet with beating heart,

The Glendoveer's embrace.

Now turn to me, for mine thou art!

Foul Arvalan exclaim'd; his loathsome

Came forth, and from the air, 130 In fleshly form, he burst.

Always in horror and despair
Had Kailyal seen that form and face
accurst,

But yet so sharp a pang had ne'er Shot with a thrill like death through all her frame,

As now when on her hour of joy the Spectre came.

10

Vain is resistance now,
The fiendish laugh of Lorrinite is heard;
And at her dreadful word,

The Asuras once again appear, 140 And seize Ladurlad and the Glendoveer.

11

Hold your accursed hands!

A voice exclaim'd, whose dread commands [Padalon;

Were fear'd through all the vaults of And there among them, in the midnight air,

The presence of the mighty Baly shone.

He, making manifest his mightiness,

Put forth on every side an hundred

arms,

And seized the Sorceress; maugre all her charms,

Her and her fiendish ministers he caught 150

With force as uncontroulable as fate;
And that unhappy Soul, to whom
The Almighty Rajah's power availeth not
Living to avert, nor dead to mitigate
His righteous doom.

Help, help, Kehama! Father, help! he cried,

But Baly tarried not to abide That mightier Power; with irresistible feet

He stampt and cleft the Earth; it open'd wide,

And gave him way to his own Judgement-seat. 16

Down, like a plummet, to the World below

He sunk, and bore his prey
To punishment deserved, and endless
woe.

XVIII. KEHAMA'S DESCENT

1

THE Earth, by Baly's feet divided, Closed o'er his way as to the Judgement-scat

He plunged and bore his prey. Scarce had the shock subsided, When, darting from the Swerga's heavenly heights,

Kehama, like a thunderbolt, alights.
In wrath he came, a bickering flame
Flash'd from his eyes which made the
moonlight dim,

And passion forcing way from every limb,

Like furnace-smoke, with terrors wrapt him round.

Furious he smote the ground;
Earth trembled underneath the dreadful stroke,

Again in sunder riven;
He hurl'd in rage his whirling weapon
down.

But lo! the fiery sheckra to his feet Return'd, as if by equal force redriven. And from the abyss the voice of Baly came:

Not yet, O Rajah, hast thou won
The realms of Padalon!

Earth and the Swerga are thine own,
But, till Kehama shall subdue
the throne

Of Hell, in torments Yamen holds his son.

2

Fool that he is!.. in torments let him lie!

Kehama, wrathful at his son, replied. But what am I,

That thou should'st brave me?.. kindling in his pride

The dreadful Rajah cried.

Ho! Yamen! hear me. God of
Padalon.

Prepare thy throne,
And let the Amreeta cup 3
Be ready for my lips, when I anon
Triumphantly shall take my scat
thereon,

And plant upon thy neck my royal feet.

3

In voice like thunder thus the Rajah cried.

Impending o'er the abyss, with menacing hand

Put forth, as in the action of command,
And eyes that darted their red anger
down.

Then drawing back he let the earth subside,

And, as his wrath relax'd, survey'd, Thoughtfully and silently, the mortal Maid.

Her eye the while was on the farthest sky,

Where up the ethereal height Ereenia rose and pass'd away from sight. Never had she so joyfully
Beheld the coming of the Glendoveer,
Dear as he was and he deserved to be,
As now she saw him rise and disappear.

Come now what will, within her heart said she.

For thou art safe, and what have I to fear?

4

Meantime the Almighty Rajah, late 50
In power and majesty and wrath array'd,
Had laid his terrors by
And gazed upon the Maid.
Pride could not quit his eye,
Nor that remorseless nature from his

front
Depart; yet whoso had beheld him then
Had felt some admiration mix'd with
dread,

And might have said,
That sure he seem'd to be the King
of Men!

Less than the greatest that he could not be, 60

Who carried in his port such might and majesty.

υ

In fear no longer for the Glendoveer, Now towards the Rajah Kailyal turn'd her eyes

As if to ask what doom awaited her.

But then surprise,

Even as with fascination held them there,

So strange a thing it seem'd to see the change

Of purport in that all-commanding brow,

Which thoughtfully was bent upon her now.

Wondering she gazed, the while her Father's eye Was fix'd upon Kehama haughtily; It spake defiance to him, high disdain, Stern patience unsubduable by pain, And pride triumphant over agony.

6

Ladurlad, said the Rajah, thou and I Alike have done the work of Destiny, Unknowing each to what the impulse tended;

But now that over Earth and Heaven my reign

Is stablish'd, and the ways of Fate are plain

Before me, here our enmity is ended.

I take away thy Curse . . As thus he said.

The fire which in Ladurlad's heart and brain

Was burning, fled, and left him free from pain.

So rapidly his torments were departed,
That at the sudden ease he started,
As with a shock, and to his head
His hands up-fled,

As if he felt through every failing limb The power and sense of life forsaking him.

7

Then turning to the Maid, the Rajah cried, 90

O Virgin, above all of mortal birth
Favour'd alike in beauty and in worth,
And in the glories of thy destiny,
Now let thy happy heart exult with
pride.

For Fate hath chosen thee
To be Kehama's bride,
To be the Queen of Heaven and Earth,
And of whatever Worlds beside
Infinity may hide . . For I can see
The writing which, at thy nativity,
All-knowing Nature wrought upon thy
brain,

In branching veins, which to the gifted eye

Map out the mazes of futurity.

There is it written, Maid, that thou
and I,

Alone of human kind a deathless pair,
Are doom'd to share
The Amreeta-drink divine
Of immortality. Come, Maiden mine!
High-fated One, ascend the subject
sky,

And by Kehama's side 110 Sit on the Swerga throne, his equal bride.

8

Oh never, .. never, .. Father! Kailyal cried;

It is not as he saith, . . it cannot be!
I!.. I, his bride!

Nature is nover false; he wrongeth her! My heart belies such lines of destiny. There is no other true interpreter!

9

At that reply, Kehama's darkening brow

Bewray'd the anger which he yet suppress'd;

Counsel thy daughter! tell her thou art now 120

Free from thy Curse, he said, and bid her bow

In thankfulness to Fate's benign behest.
Bid her her stubborn will restrain,
For Destiny at last must be obey'd,
And tell her, while obedience is delay'd,

Thy Curse will burn again.

10

She needeth not my counsel, he replied,
And idly, Rajah, dost thou reason thus
Of destiny! for though all other
things 129

Were subject to the starry influencings, And bow'd submissive to thy tyranny, The virtuous heart and resolute mind are free.

Thus in their wisdom did the Gods decree

When they created man. Let come what will, [ill,

This is our rock of strength; in every Sorrow, oppression, pain and agony, The spirit of the good is unsubdued, And, suffer as they may, they triumph still.

11

Obstinate fools! exclaim'd the Mighty One,

Fate and my pleasure must be done,
And ye resist in vain! 141
Take your fit guerdon till we meet
again!

So saying, his vindictive hand he flung Towards them, fill'd with curses; then on high

Aloft he sprung, and vanish'd through the Sky.

XIX. MOUNT CALASAY

1

THE Rajah, scattering curses as he rose, Soar'd to the Swerga, and resumed his throne.

Not for his own redoubled agony, Which now through heart and brain With renovated pain,

Rush'd to its seat, Ladurlad breathes that groan,

That groan is for his child; he groan'd to see

That she was stricken now with leprosy,

Which as the enemy vindictive fled, O'er all her frame with quick contagion spread. She, wondering at events so passing strange,

And fill'd with hope and fear,
And joy to see the Tyrant disappear,
And glad expectance of her Glendoveer,
Perceived not in herself the hideous
change.

His burning pain, she thought, had forced the groan

Her father breathed; his agonies alone Were present to her mind; she clasp'd his knees,

Wept for his Curse, and did not feel her own.

2

Nor when she saw her plague, did her good heart, 20

True to itself, even for a moment fail. Ha, Rajah! with disdainful smile she cries,

Mighty and wise and wicked as thou art, Still thy blind vengeance acts a friendly part.

Shall I not thank thee for this scurf and scale [ness,

Of dire deformity, whose loathsome-Surer than panoply of strongest mail, Arms me against all foes? Oh, better so, Better such foul disgrace.

Than that this innocent face 3 Should tempt thy wooing! That I need not dread;

Nor ever impious foe
Will offer outrage now, nor farther woe
Will beauty draw on my unhappy head,
Safe through the unholy world may
Kailyal go.

3

Her face in virtuous pride
Was lifted to the skies,
As him and his poor vengeance she
defied:

But earthward, when she ceased, she turn'd her eyes,

As if she thought to hide
The tear which in her own despite
would rise.

Did then the thought of her own Glendoveer

Call forth that natural tear?
Was it a woman's fear,

A thought of earthly love which troubled her?

Like yon thin cloud amid the moonlight sky

That flits before the wind And leaves no trace behind,

The womanly pang pass'd over Kailyal's mind.

This is a loathsome sight to human eye.

Half-shrinking at herself the Maiden
thought; 50

Will it be so to him? Oh surely not!

The immortal Powers, who see

Through the poor wrappings of

mortality, [within,

Behold the soul, the beautiful soul,
Exempt from age and wasting maladies,
And undeform'd, while pure and free
from sin.

This is a loathsome sight to human eyes, But not to eyes divine,

Ereenia, Son of Heaven, oh not to thine!

4

The wrongful thought of fear, the womanly pain

Had pass'd away, her heart was calm again. [see

She raised her head, expecting now to The Glendoveer appear;

Where hath he fled, quoth she, That he should tarry now? Oh! had she known

Whither the adventurous son of Heaven was flown Strong as her spirit was, it had not borne

The appalling thought, nor dared to hope for his return.

5

For he in search of Seeva's throne was gone, 70

To tell his tale of wrong;
In search of Seeva's own abode
The Glendoveer began his heavenly
road. [skie

O wild emprize! above the farthest He hoped to rise!

Him who is throned beyond the reach of thought,

The Alone, the Inaccessible, he sought.

O wild emprize! for when in days of yore,

For proud pre-eminence of power, Brama and Veeshnoo, wild with rage contended, 80

And Seeva, in his might,
Their dread contention ended;
Before their sight

In form a fiery column did he tower, Whose head above the highest height extended,

Whose base below the deepest depth descended.

Downward, its depth to sound

Veeshnoo a thousand years explored

The fathomless profound,

And yet no base he found: 90

Upward, to reach its head,

Ten myriad years the aspiring Brama

soar'd.

And still, as up he fled,
Above him still the Immeasurable
spread.

The rivals own'd their Lord,
And trembled and adored.
How shall the Glendoveer attain
What Brama and what Veeshnoo sought
in vain?

- 6

Ne'er did such thought of lofty daring enter

Celestial Spirit's mind. O wild adventure 100

That throne to find, for he must leave behind

This World, that in the centre,
Within its salt-sea girdle, lies confined;
Yea the Seven Earths that, each with
its own ocean.

Ring clasping ring, compose the mighty round.

What power of motion, In less than endless years shall bear him there,

Along the limitless extent,

To the utmost bound of the remotest
spheres?

What strength of wing 210 Suffice to pierce the Golden Firmament That closes all within?

Yet he hath pass'd the measureless extent

And pierced the Golden Firmament; For Faith hath given him power, and Space and Time

Vanish before that energy sublime.

Nor doth eternal Night

And outer Darkness check his resolute flight;

By strong desire through all he makes his way,

Till Seeva's Seat appears, . . behold Mount Calasay! 120

7

Behold the Silver Mountain! round about

Seven ladders stand, so high, the aching eye,

Seeking their tops in vain amid the sky,

Might deem they led from earth to highest Heaven.

Ages would pass away,
And worlds with age decay,
Ere one whose patient feet from ring
to ring

Must win their upward way, Could reach the summit of Mount Calasay.

But that strong power that nerved his wing, 130

That all-surmounting will,
Intensity of faith and holiest love,
Sustain'd Ereenia still,
And he hath gain'd the plain, the
sanctuary above.

8

Lo, there the Silver Bell,
That, self-sustain'd, hangs buoyant in
the air!

Lo! the broad Table there, too bright For mortal sight,

From whose four sides the bordering gems unite

Their harmonising rays, 140
In one mid fount of many-colour'd light.
The stream of splendour, flashing as
it flows,

Plays round, and feeds the stem of you celestial Rose! [declare Where is the Sage whose wisdom can The hidden things of that mysterious flower, [to bear?

That flower which serves all mysteries
The sacred Triangle is there,

Holding the Emblem which no tongue may tell;

Is this the Heaven of Heavens, where Seeva's self doth dwell?

9

Here first the Glendoveer
Felt his wing flag, and paused upon
his flight. [here
Was it that fear came over him, when
He saw the imagined throne appear?

Not so, for his immortal sight
Endured the Table's light;
Distinctly he beheld all things around,
And doubt and wonder rose within his
mind

That this was all he found. Howbeit he lifted up his voice and spake.

There is oppression in the World below; Earth groans beneath the yoke; yea, in her woe, 161

She asks if the Avenger's eye is blind?
Awake, O Lord, awake!

Too long thy vengeance sleepeth. Holiest One! [sake,

Put thou thy terrors on for mercy's

And strike the blow, in justice to

mankind!

10

So as he pray'd, intenser faith he felt, His spirit seem'd to melt With ardent yearnings of increasing love:

Upward he turn'd his eyes 170
As if there should be something yet
above; [cries;

Let me not, Seeva, seek in vain! he Thou art not here, . . for how should these contain thee?

Thou art not here, . . for how should I sustain thee?

But thou, where'er thou art, Canst hear the voice of prayer, Canst read the righteous heart. Thy dwelling who can tell,

Or who, O Lord, hath seen thy secret throne?

But thou art not alone,
Not unapproachable!
O all-containing Mind,
Thou who art every where,
Whom all who seek shall find,
Hear me, O Seeva! hear the suppliant's prayer!

So saying, up he sprung, And struck the Bell, which self-suspended hung

Before the mystic Rose.

From side to side the silver tongue Melodious swung, and far and wide Soul-thrilling tones of heavenly music

rung. 19

Abash'd, confounded,
It left the Glendoveer; . . yea all
astounded

In overpowering fear and deep dismay;
For when that Bell had sounded,
The Rose, with all the mysteries it
surrounded,

The Bell, the Table, and Mount Calasay,
The holy Hill itself, with all thereon,
Even as a morning dream before the day
Dissolves away, they faded and were
gone. 200

12

Where shall he rest his wing, where turn for flight,

For all around is Light, Primal, essential, all-pervading Light! Heart cannot think, nor tongue declare,

Nor eyes of Angel bear That Glory unimaginably bright; The Sun himself had seem'd

A speck of darkness there, Amid that Light of Light!

13

Down fell the Glendoveer, 210 Down through all regions, to our mundane sphere

He fell; but in his ear [heard, A Voice, which from within him came, was The indubitable word

Of Him to whom all secret things are known: [throne.

Go, ye who suffer, go to Yamen's He hath the remedy for every woe; He setteth right whate'er is wrong below.

XX. THE EMBARKATION

1

Down from the Heaven of Heavens

Ereenia fell

Precipitate, yet imperceptible His fall, nor had he cause nor thought of fear;

And when he came within this mundane sphere,

And felt that Earth was near, The Glendoveer his azure wings expanded,

And, sloping down the sky
Toward the spot from whence he
sprung on high,

There on the shore he landed.

2

Kailyal advanced to meet him, ro Not moving now as she was wont to greet him,

Joy in her eye and in her eager pace;
With a calm smile of melancholy pride
She met him now, and turning half aside
Her warning hand repell'd the dear
embrace.

3

Strange things, Ereenia, have befallen us here,

The Virgin said; the Almighty Man hath read

The lines which, traced by Nature on my brain,

There to the gifted eye
Make all my fortunes plain,
Mapping the mazes of futurity.

He sued for peace, for it is written there
That I with him the Amreeta cup
must share:

Wherefore he bade me come, and by his side

Sit on the Swerga throne, his equal bride.

I need not tell thee what reply was given: My heart, the sure interpreter of Heaven, His impious words belied.

Thou seest his poor revenge! So having said,

One look she glanced upon her leprous stain

Indignantly, and shook Her head in calm disdain.

O Maid of soul divine! O more than ever dear. And more than ever mine. Replied the Glendoveer; He hath not read, be sure, the mystic wavs

Of Fate: almighty as he is, that maze Hath mock'd his fallible sight. Said he the Amreeta-cup? So far aright The Evil One may see; for Fate

displays Her hidden things in part, and part conceals,

Baffling the wicked eye Alike with what she hides, and what reveals.

When with unholy purpose it would pry Into the secrets of futurity. So may it be permitted him to see Dimly the inscrutable decree;

For to the World below. Where Yamen guards the Amreeta, we

must go; Thus Seeva hath express'd his will, [he saith. even he The Holiest hath ordain'd it; there,

All wrongs shall be redrest By Yamen, by the righteous Power of Death.

Forthwith the Father and the fated Maid,

And that heroic Spirit, who for them

Such flight had late essav'd. The will of Heaven obey'd. They went their way along the road That leads to Yamen's dread abode.

Many a day hath pass'd away Since they began their arduous way, Their way of toil and pain: And now their weary feet attain The Earth's remotest bound. Where outer Ocean girds it round. But not like other Oceans this: Rather it seem'd a drear abyss, Upon whose brink they stood.

Oh! scene of fear! the travellers hear The raging of the flood; They hear how fearfully it roars, But clouds of darker shade than night For ever hovering round those shores, Hide all things from their sight: The Sun upon that darkness pours

His unavailing light, Nor ever Moon nor Stars display, Through the thick shade, one guiding

To show the perils of the way.

There in a creek a vessel lay, Just on the confines of the day, It rode at anchor in its bay, These venturous pilgrims to convey Across that outer Sea. Strange vessel sure it seem'd to be, And all unfit for such wild sea! For through its yawning side the wave Was oozing in; the mast was frail, And old and torn its only sail. How may that crazy vessel brave The billows that in wild commotion

For ever roar and rave? How hope to cross the dreadful Ocean O'er which eternal shadows dwell, Whose secrets none return to tell!

Well might the travellers fear to enter!

But summon'd once on that adventure,

For them was no retreat.

Nor boots it with reluctant feet 100
To linger on the strand:

Aboard! aboard!

An aweful voice, that left no choice, Sent forth its stern command,

Aboard! aboard!

The travellers hear that voice in fear, And breathe to Heaven an inward prayer,

And take their seats in silence there.

q

Self-hoisted then, behold the sail
Expands itself before the gale; 110
Hands, which they cannot see, let slip
The cable of that fated ship;
The land breeze sends her on her way,
And lo! they leave the living light of
day!

XXI. THE WORLD'S END

1

Swift as an arrow in its flight
The Ship shot through the incumbent
night;

And they have left behind
The raging billows and the roaring wind,
The storm, the darkness, and all
mortal fears:

And lo! another light To guide their way appears, The light of other spheres.

2

That instant from Ladurlad's heart and brain

The Curse was gone; he feels again Fresh as in youth's fair morning, and the Maid

Hath lost her leprous stain.

The Tyrant then hath no dominion here, Starting she cried; O happy, happy

We are beyond his power!
Then raising to the Glendoveer,
With heavenly beauty bright, her
angel face,

Turn'd not reluctant now, and met his dear embrace.

3

Swift glides the Ship with gentle motion
Across that calm and quiet ocean; 20
That glassy sea which seem'd to be
The mirror of tranquillity.

Their pleasant passage soon was o'er, The Ship hath reach'd its destined shore;

A level belt of ice which bound,
As with an adamantine mound,
The waters of the sleeping Ocean round.
Strange forms were on the strand
Of earth-born spirits slain before their
time;

Who wandering over sea and sky and land, 30

Had so fulfill'd their term; and now were met

Upon this icy belt, a motley band, Waiting their summons at the appointed hour,

When each before the Judgement-seat must stand,

And hear his doom from Baly's righteous power.

4

Foul with habitual crimes, a hideous crew

Were there, the race of rapine and of

Now having overpass'd the mortal flood, Their own deformity they knew, And knew the meed that to their deeds was due. Therefore in fear and agony they stood, Expecting when the Evil Messenger Among them should appear. But with their fear

A hope was mingled now;
O'er the dark shade of guilt a deeper hue
It threw, and gave a fiercer character
To the wild eye and lip and sinful brow.
They hoped that soon Kehama would
subdue

The inexorable God and seize his throne, Reduce the infernal World to his command, 50

And with his irresistible right hand, Redeem them from the vaults of Padalon.

5

Apart from these a milder company, The victims of offences not their own, Look'd when the appointed Messenger should come;

Gather'd together some, and some alone Brooding in silence on their future doom.

Widows whom, to their husbands'
funeral fire, [pyre,
Force or strong error led, to share the
As to their everlasting marriage-bed:
And babes, by sin unstain'd, 6r
Whom erring parents vow'd
To Ganges, and the holy stream profaned [unordain'd]

With that strange sacrifice, rite By Law, by sacred Nature unallow'd: Others more hapless in their destiny, Scarce having first inhaled their vital breath.

Whose cradles from some tree
Unnatural hands suspended,
Then left, till gentle Death, 70
Coming like Sleep, their feeble moanings ended;

Or for his prey the ravenous Kite descended;

Or marching like an army from their caves,

The Pismires blacken'd o'er, then bleach'd and bare

Left their unharden'd bones to fall asunder there.

6

Innocent Souls! thus set so early free From sin and sorrow and mortality, Their spotless spirits all-creating Love Received into its universal breast.

Yon blue serene above 80
Was their domain; clouds pillow'd them to rest;

The Elements on them like nurses tended,

And with their growth ethereal substance blended.

Less pure than these is that strange Indian bird, [bill

Who never dips in earthly streams her But, when the sound of coming showers is heard,

Looks up, and from the clouds receives her fill.

Less pure the footless fowl of Heaven, that never [ever

Rest upon earth, but on the wing for Hovering o'er flowers, their fragrant food inhale,

Drink the descending dew upon its way, And sleep aloft while floating on the gale.

7

And thus these innocents in yonder sky Grow and are strengthen'd, while the allotted years

Perform their course; then hitherward they fly,

Being free from moral taint, so free from fears.

A joyous band, expecting soon to soar
To Indra's happy spheres,
And mingle with the blessed company
Of heavenly spirits there for ever more.

A Gulph profound surrounded
This icy belt; the opposite side
With highest rocks was bounded;
But where their heads they hide,
Or where their base is founded,
None could espy. Above all reach of
sight

They rose, the second Earth was on their height, [night. Their feet were fix'd in everlasting

9

So deep the Gulph, no eye
Could plum its dark profundity, 110
Yet all its depth must try; for this
the road

To Padalon, and Yamen's dread abode.

And from below continually

Ministrant Demons rose and caught

The Souls whose hour was come;

Then with their burthen fraught,

Plunged down, and bore them to

receive their doom.

10

Then might be seen who went in hope, and who

Trembled to meet the meed
Of many a foul misdeed, as wild they
threw

Their arms retorted from the Demons' grasp,

And look'd around, all eagerly, to seek For help, where help was none; and strove for aid

To clasp the nearest shade;
Yea, with imploring looks and horrent shriek, [bending,

Even from one Demon to another With hands extending, Their mercy they essay'd.

Their mercy they essay'd.

Still from the verge they strain,
And from the dreadful gulph avert their
eyes, 130

In vain; down plunge the Demons, and their cries

Feebly, as down they sink, from that profound arise.

11

What heart of living man could, undisturb'd, [there

Bear sight so sad as this! What wonder
If Kailyal's lip were blanch'd with
inmost dread!

The chill which from that icy belt Struck through her, was less keen than what she felt

With her heart's blood through every limb dispread.

Close to the Glendoveer she clung,
And clasping round his neck her
trembling hands,
She closed her eyes, and there in

silence hung.

12

Then to Ladurlad said the Glendovcer, These Demons, whom thou seest, the ministers

Of Yamen, wonder to behold us here; But for the dead they come, and not for us; [thus,

Therefore albeit they gaze upon thee
Have thou no fear.

A little while thou must be left alone, Till I have borne thy daughter down, And placed her safely by the throne Of him who keeps the Gate of Padalon.

13

Then taking Kailyal in his arms, he said, 152

Be of good heart, Beloved! it is I
Who bear thee. Saying this, his wings
he spread,

Sprung upward in the sky, and poised his flight,

Then plunged into the Gulph, and sought the World of Night.

XXII. THE GATE OF PADALON

THE strong foundations of this inmost Earth

Rest upon Padalon. That icy Mound Which girt the mortal Ocean round, Reach'd the profound, . .

Ice in the regions of the upper air, Crystal midway, and adamant below, Whose strength sufficed to bear The weight of all this upper World of

of Woe. And with its rampart closed the Realm Eight gates hath Padalon; eight

heavenly Powers Have them in charge, each alway at his post,

Lest from their penal caves the accursed host.

Maugre the might of Baly and the God, Should break, and carry ruin all abroad.

Those gates stand ever open, night and dav.

And Souls of mortal men For ever throng the way. Some from the dolorous den, Children of sin and wrath, return no

They, fit companions of the Spirits accurst,

Are doom'd, like them in baths of fire immerst.

Or weltering upon beds of molten ore, Or stretch'd upon the brazen floor, Are fasten'd down with adamantine

chains:

While, on their substance inconsumable, Leeches of fire for ever hang and pull, And worms of fire for ever gnaw their food.

That, still renew'd. Freshens for ever their perpetual pains.

Others there were whom Baly's voice condemn'd,

By long and painful penance, to atone Their fleshly deeds. Them, from the Judgement-throne,

Dread Azyoruca, where she sat involved In darkness as a tent, received, and dealt

To each the measure of his punishment; Till, in the central springs of fire, the Will

Impure is purged away; and the freed soul.

Thus fitted to receive a second birth, Embodied once again, revisits Earth.

But they whom Baly's righteous voice absolved.

And Yamen, viewing with benignant

Dismiss'd to seek their heritage on high. How joyfully they leave this gloomy bourne,

The dread sojourn

Of Guilt and twin-born Punishment and Woe.

And wild Remorse, here link'd with worse Despair!

They to the eastern Gate rejoicing go: The Ship of Heaven awaits their

coming there, And on they sail, greeting the blessed

Through realms of upper air, Bound for the Swerga once: but now no more

Their voyage rests upon that happy ahore. might

Since Indra, by the dreadful Rajah's Compell'd, hath taken flight;

On to the second World their way they wend,

And there, in trembling hope, await the doubtful end.

5

For still in them doth hope predominate,

Faith's precious privilege, when higher Powers [hours.

Give way to fear in these portentous

Behold the Wardens eight, 60

Each silent at his gate

Expectant stands; they turn their anxious eyes

Within, and, listening to the dizzy din
Of mutinous uproar, each in all his
hands [fight.

Holds all his weapons, ready for the For, hark! what clamorous cries Upon Kehama, for deliverance, call! Come, Rajah! they exclaim, too long

we groan
In torments. Come, Deliverer!

yonder throne
Awaits thee... Now. Kehama!

Rajah, now! 70
Earthly Almighty, wherefore tarriest

thou?.. Such were the sounds that rung, in

wild uproar, O'er all the echoing vaults of Padalon;

And as the Asuras from the Brazen floor, [to rise,

Struggling against their fetters, strove Their clashing chains were heard, and shrieks and cries,

With curses mix'd, against the Fiends who urge,

Fierce on their rebel limbs, the avenging scourge.

ß

These were the sounds which, at the southern gate,

Assail'd Ereenia's ear; alighting here He laid before Neroodi's feet the Maid, Who, pale and cold with fear, and Hung on his neck, well-nigh a lifeless weight. - 7

Who and what art thou? cried the Guardian Power,

Sight so unwonted wondering to behold, . .

O Son of Light!

Who comest here at this portentous hour,

When Yamen's throne Trembles, and all our might can scarce keep down

The rebel race from seizing Padalon,.

Who and what art thou? and what
wild despair.

Or wilder hope, from realms of upper air Tempts thee to bear

This mortal Maid to our forlorn abodes

Fitter for her, I ween, the Swerga
bowers,

And sweet society of heavenly Powers Than this, . . a doleful scene,

Even in securest hours.

And whither would ye go?

Alas! can human or celestial ear,

Unmadden'd, hear 10
The shrieks and yellings of infernal woe
Can living flesh and blood

Endure the passage of the fiery flood!

3

Lord of the Gate, replied the Glendoveer We come obedient to the will of Fate; And haply doom'd to bring

Hope and salvation to the Infernal King.

For Seeva sends us here,
Even He to whom futurity is known,
The Holiest, bade us go to Yamen's
throne.

Thou seest my precious charge; Under thy care, secure from harm, I leave her.

While I ascend to bear her father down
Beneath the shelter of thine arm
receive her!

9

Then quoth he to the Maid,
Be of good cheer, my Kailyal! dearest
dear.

In faith subdue thy dread;
Anon I shall be here. So having said,
Aloft with vigorous bound the Glendoveer to

Sprung in celestial might,
And soaring up, in spiral circles, wound
His indefatigable flight.

10

But as he thus departed, The Maid, who at Neroodi's feet was lying,

Like one entranced or dying,
Recovering strength from sudden
terror, started; [sight,
And gazing after him with straining
And straining arms, she stood,
As if in attitude 130

As if in attitude 130
To win him back from flight.
Yea, she had shaped his name
For utterance, to recall and bid him
stay, [shame

Nor leave her thus alone; but virtuous Represt the unbidden sounds upon

their way;

And calling faith to aid,
Even in this fearful hour, the pious Maid
Collected courage, till she seem'd to be
Calm and in hope, such power hath
piety.

Before the Giant Keeper of the Gate She crost her patient arms, and at his feet.

Prepar'd to meet

The aweful will of Fate with equal mind,
She took her seat resign'd.

11

Even the stern trouble of Neroodi's brow Relax'd as he beheld the valiant Maid. Hope, long unfelt till now, Rose in his heart reviving, and a smile Dawn'd in his brightening countenance, the while

He gazed on her with wonder and delight. 150

The blessing of the Powers of Padalon, Virgin, be on thee! said the admiring God; [birth,

And blessed be the hour that gave thee

Daughter of Earth!

For thou to this forlorn abode hast brought

Hope, who too long hath been a stranger here.

And surely for no lamentable lot
Nature, that erreth not,
To thee that heart of fortitude hath
given.

Those eyes of purity, that face of love; . . 160

If thou beëst not the inheritrix of Heaven,

There is no truth above.

12

Thus as Neroodi spake, his brow severe Shone with an inward joy; for sure he thought

When Seeva sent so fair a creature here, In this momentous hour,

Ere long the World's deliverance would be wrought,

And Padalon escape the Rajah's power.
With pious mind the Maid, in humble
guise

Inclined, received his blessing silently,
And raised her grateful eyes 171
A moment, then again [high

Abased them at his presence. Hark! on The sound of coming wings!..her anxious ears

Have caught the distant sound. Ereenia brings

His burthen down! Upstarting from her seat.

How joyfully she rears

Her eager head! and scarce upon the
ground [found,
Ladurlad's giddy feet their footing

When, with her trembling arms, she
claspt him round. 180

No word of greeting,

Nor other sign of joy at that strange
meeting;

Expectant of their fate,
Silent, and hand in hand,
Before the Infernal Gate.

The Father and his pious Daughter stand.

Then to Neroodi said the Glendoveer, No Heaven-born Spirit e'er hath visited This region drear and dread; but I, the first

Who tread your World accurst. 190
Lord of the Gate, to whom these
realms are known,
Direct our fated way to Yamen's
throne.

14 Bring forth my Chariot, Carmala!

quoth then
The Keeper of the way.
It was the Car wherein
On Yamen's festal day,
When all the Powers of Hell attend
their King,
Yearly to Yamenpur did he repair

To pay his homage there.

Poised on a single wheel, it moved

along, 200
Instinct with motion; by what wondrous skill

Compact, no human tongue could tell, Nor human wit devise; but on that

wheel,
Moving or still,
As if with life indued,
The Car miraculous supported stood.

15

Then Carmala brought forth two mantles, white

As the swan's breast, and bright as mountain snow,

When from the wintry sky
The sun, late-rising, shines upon the
height, 210
And rolling vapours fill the vale below.

Not without pain the unaccustom'd
sight

That brightness could sustain;
For neither mortal stain,
Nor parts corruptible, remain,
Nor aught that time could touch, or
force destroy,

In that pure web whereof the robes
were wrought; [tried,
So long had it in tenfold fires been

And blanch'd, and to that brightness purified.

Apparell'd thus, alone, 220 Children of Earth, Neroodi cried, In safety may ye pass to Yamen's throne. [blood

Thus only can your living flesh and Endure the passage of the fiery flood.

16

Of other frame, O son of Heaven, art thou!

Yet hast thou now to go Through regions which thy heavenly mould will try.

Glories unutterably bright, I know, And beams intense of empyrean light, Thine eye divine can bear: but fires of woe.

The sight of torments, and the cry Of absolute despair,

Might not these things dismay thee on thy flight,

And thy strong pennons flag and fail thee there? [thou art, Trust not thy wings, celestial though Nor thy good heart, which horror might assail

And pity quail,

Pity in these abodes of no avail; But take thy seat this mortal pair beside.

And Carmala the infernal Car will guide. 240

Go, and may happy end your way betide! [roll'd on, So, as he spake, the self-moved Car And lo! they pass the Gate of Padalon.

XXIII. PADALON

WHOE'ER hath loved with venturous step to tread The chambers dread Of some deep cave, and seen his taper's

Lost in the arch of darkness overhead.

And mark'd its gleam, Playing afar upon the sunless stream,

Where from their secret bed. And course unknown and inaccessible,

The silent waters well; Whoe'er hath trod such caves of endless

night, He knows, when measuring back the gloomy way,

With what delight refresh'd his eye Perceives the shadow of the light of

day, Through the far portal slanting, where Dimly reflected on the watery walls;

How heavenly seems the sky; And how, with quicken'd feet, he hastens up.

Eager again to greet The living World and blessed sunshine there.

And drink, as from a cup

Far other light than that of day there shone

Upon the travellers, entering Padalon. They too in darkness enter'd on their wav.

But, far before the Car, A glow, as of a fiery furnace light, Fill'd all before them. 'Twas a light which made

Darkness itself appear A thing of comfort, and the sight, dismav'd.

Shrunk inward from the molten atmosphere.

Their way was through the adamantine rock

Which girt the World of Woe; on either Its massive walls arose, and overhead Arch'd the long passage; onward as they ride,

With stronger glare the light around them spread;

And lo! the regions dread, The World of Woe before them, opening wide.

There rolls the fiery flood, Girding the realms of Padalon around.

A sea of flame it seem'd to be. Sea without bound:

For neither mortal nor immortal sight, Could pierce across through that intensest light.

A single rib of steel,

Keen as the edge of keenest scymitar, Spann'd this wide gulph of fire. The infernal Car

Roll'd to the Gulph, and on its single wheel

Self-balanced, rose upon that edge of [head. steel.

20 Red-quivering float the vapours over-Of joy, with thirsty lips, the open air. The fiery gulph beneath them spread.

Tosses its billowing blaze with rush and roar; 51
Steady and swift the self-moved Chariot went,
Winning the long ascent,
Then, downward rolling, gains the

farther shore.

But, oh! what sounds and sights of woe,
What sights and sounds of fear,
Assail the mortal travellers here!
Their way was on a causey straight
and wide,

Where penal vaults on either side were seen.

Ranged like the cells wherein 60
Those wondrous winged alchemists
infold

Their stores of liquid gold.

Thick walls of adamant divide
The dungeons; and from yonder
circling flood,

Off-streams of fire through secret channels glide,

And wind among them, and in each provide

An everlasting food
Of rightful torments for the accursed
broad.

5

These were the rebel race, who in their might

Confiding impiously, would fain have driven 70

The Deities supreme from highest Heaven:

But by the Suras, in celestial fight, Opposed and put to flight,

Here, in their penal dens, the accursed crew,

Not for its crime, but for its failure, rue Their wild ambition. Yet again they long

The contest to renew.

And wield their arms again in happier hour:

And with united power,
Following Kehama's triumph, to press

From World to World, and Heaven to Heaven, and Sphere

To Sphere, till Hemakoot shall be their own,

And Meru-Mount, and Indra's Swerga-Bowers,

And Brama's region, where the heavenly Hours [day. Weave the vast circle of his age-long Even over Veeshnoo's empyreal seat

They trust the Rajah shall extend their sway,

And that the seven-headed Snake, whereon

The strong Preserver sets his conquering feet,

Will rise and shake him headlong from his throne, 90

When, in their irresistible array, Amid the Milky Sea they force their

Even higher yet their frantic thoughts aspire:

Yea, on their beds of torment as they lie,

The highest, holiest Seeva, they defy, And tell him they shall have anon their day,

When they will storm his realm, and seize Mount Calasay.

6

Such impious hopes torment Their raging hearts, impious and impotent;

And now, with unendurable desire

And lust of vengeance, that, like inward fire,

ror

Doth aggravate their punishment, they rave

Upon Kehama; him the accursed rout Acclaim: with furious cries and maddening shout They call on him to save ; Kehama! they exclaim; Thundering the dreadful echo rolls about. And Hell's whole vault repeats Kehama's name. Over these dens of punishment, the host Of Padalon maintain eternal guard, Keeping upon the walls their vigilant At every angle stood A watch-tower, the decurion Demon's post. Where raised on high he view'd with sleepless eye His trust, that all was well. And over [Hell. these. Such was the perfect discipline of Captains of fifties and of hundreds held Authority, each in his loftier tower; And chiefs of legions over them had power: And thus all Hell with towers was girt around. 120 Aloft the brazen turrets shone In the red light of Padalon; And on the walls between. Dark moving, the infernal Guards were seen. Gigantic Demons, pacing to and fro; Who ever and anon, Spreading their crimson pennons, plunged below, Faster to rivet down the Asuras' chains. And with the snaky scourge and fiercer pains. Repress their rage rebellious. Loud around.

In mingled sound, the echoing lash,

the clash

iron stroke, With execrations, groans, and shricks and cries Combined, in one wild dissonance. arise; And through the din there broke, Like thunder heard through all the warring winds. The dreadful name. Kehama, still they rave. Hasten and save! Now, now, Deliverer! now, Kehama, Earthly Almighty, wherefore tarriest thou? 140 8 Oh, if that name abhorr'd, Thus utter'd, could well nigh Dismay the Powers of Hell, and daunt their Lord. How fearfully to Kailyal's ear it came! She, as the Car roll'd on its rapid way, Bent down her head, and closed her eyes for dread; And deafening, with strong effort from within. Her ears against the din, Cover'd and press'd them close with both her hands. Sure if the mortal Maiden had not fed On heavenly food, and long been strengthened With heavenly converse for such end vouchsafed. Her human heart had fail'd, and she had died Beneath the horrors of this aweful hour. But Heaven supplied a power Beyond her earthly nature, to the measure

Of need infusing strength;

And Fate, whose secret and unerring

pleasure

Of chains, the ponderous hammer's

Appointed all, decreed
An ample meed and recompense at length. 160

High-fated Maid, the righteous hour is nigh!

The all-embracing Eye
Of Retribution still beholdeth thee;
Bear onward to the end, O Maid,
courageously!

9

On roll'd the Car, and lo! afar
Upon its height the towers of Yamenpur
Rise on the astonish'd sight.
Behold the infernal City, Yamen's seat
Of empire, in the midst of Padalon,
Where the eight causeys meet. 170
There on a rock of adamant it stood,
Resplendent far and wide,
Itself of solid diamond edified,
And all around it roll'd the fiery flood.
Eight bridges arch'd the stream; huge

Magnificent, such structures as beseem
The Seat and Capital of such great God,
Worthy of Yamen's own august abode.
A brazen tower and gateway at each
end

piles of brass

Of each was raised, where Giant Wardens stood, 180

Station'd in arms the passage to defend,
That never foe might cross the fiery
flood.

10

Oh what a gorgeous sight it was to see The Diamond City blazing on its height With more than mid-sun splendour, by the light

Of its own fiery river!
Its towers and domes and pinnacles and spires,

Turrets and battlements, that flash and quiver

Through the red restless atmosphere for ever;

And hovering over head, 190
The smoke and vapours of all Padalon,
Fit firmament for such a world, were
spread,

With surge and swell, and everlasting motion, [ocean.

Heaving and opening like tumultuous

11

Nor were there wanting there Such glories as beseem'd such region well;

For though with our blue heaven and genial air

The firmament of Hell might not compare,

As little might our earthly tempests vie
With the dread storms of that infernal
sky, 200

Whose clouds of all metallic elements Sublimed were full. For, when its thunder broke,

Not all the united World's artillery, In one discharge, could equal that loud stroke:

And though the Diamond Towers and Battlements

Stood firm upon their adamantine rock, Yet while it vollied round the vault of Hell, [shock,

Earth's solid arch was shaken with the And Cities in one mighty ruin fell.

Through the red sky terrific meteors scour:

Huge stones come hailing down; or sulphur-shower,

Floating amid the lurid air like snow, Kindles in its descent,

And with blue fire-drops rains on all below.

At times the whole supernal element Igniting, burst in one large sheet of flame,

And roar'd as with the sound Of rushing winds, above, below, around; Anon the flame was spent, and overhead
A heavy cloud of moving darkness
spread. 220

12

Straight to the brazen bridge and gate
The self-moved Chariot bears its
mortal load.

At sight of Carmala,

On either side the Giant guards divide, And give the chariot way.

Up yonder winding road it rolls along, Swift as the bittern soars on spiral wing, And lo! the Palace of the Infernal King!

13

Two forms inseparable in unity

Hath Yamen; even as with hope or fear 230

The Soul regardeth him doth he appear;
For hope and fear

At that dread hour, from ominous conscience spring,

And err not in their bodings. Therefore some,

They who polluted with offences come, Behold him as the King

Of Terrors, black of aspect, red of eye, Reflecting back upon the sinful mind, Heighten'd with vengeance, and with wrath divine

Its own inborn deformity. 240
But to the righteous Spirit how benign
His aweful countenance,
Where, tempering justice with parental

love,
Goodness and heavenly grace
And sweetest mercy shine! Yet is he still
Himself the same, one form, one face,

one will; [one; And these his twofold aspects are but

And change is none
In him, for change in Yamen could
not be.

The Immutable is he. 250

14

He sat upon a marble sepulchre Massive and huge, where at the Monarch's feet.

The righteous Baly had his Judgementseat. [stood;

A Golden Throne before them vacant Three human forms sustain'd its ponderous weight,

With lifted hands outspread, and shoulders bow'd

Bending beneath the load.

A fourth was wanting. They were of the hue

Of coals of fire; yet were they flesh and blood,

And living breath they drew; 260 And their red eye-balls roll'd with ghastly stare,

As thus, for their misdeeds, they stood tormented there.

15

On steps of gold those living Statues stood,

Who bore the Golden Throne. A cloud behind [light

Immovable was spread; not all the Of all the flames and fires of Padalon Could pierce its depth of night.

There Azyoruca veil'd her aweful form In those eternal shadows: there she sate.

And as the trembling Souls, who crowd around 270

The Judgement-seat, received the doom of fate,

Her giant arms, extending from the cloud,

Drew them within the darkness. Moving out [rout,

To grasp and bear away the innumerous

For ever and for ever thus were seen

The thousand mighty arms of that

dread Queen.

16

Here, issuing from the car, the Glendoveer

Did homage to the God, then raised his head.

Suppliants we come, he said,
I need not tell thee by what wrongs
opprest, 28

For nought can pass on earth to thee unknown;

Sufferers from tyranny we seek for rest, And Seeva bade us go to Yamen's throne:

Here, he hath said, all wrongs shall be redrest.

Yamen replied, Even now the hour draws near,

When Fate its hidden ways will manifest.

Not for light purpose would the Wisest send

His suppliants here, when we, in doubt and fear.

The aweful issue of the hour attend.

Wait ye in patience and in faith the
end! 290

XXIV. THE AMREETA

1

So spake the King of Padalon, when, lo! [Hell,

The voice of lamentation ceased in And sudden silence all around them fell, Silence more wild and terrible Than all the infernal dissonance before. Through that portentous stillness, far

away,
Unwonted sounds were heard, advancing on
And deepening on their way;
For now the inexorable hour
Was come, and, in the fulness of his

power, 10

Now that the dreadful rites had all been done,

Kehama from the Swerga hasten'd down,

To seize upon the throne of Padalon.

2

He came in all his might and majesty,
With all his terrors clad, and all his
pride;

And, by the attribute of Deity, Which he had won from Heaven, selfmultiplied,

The Almighty Man appear'd on every side.

In the same indivisible point of time, At the eight Gates he stood at once, and beat

The Warden-Gods of Hell beneath his feet;

Then, in his brazen Cars of triumph, straight,

At the same moment, drove through every gate.

By Aullays, hugest of created kind, Fiercest, and fleeter than the viewless wind.

His Cars were drawn, ten yokes of ten abroast, . .

What less sufficed for such almighty weight?

Eight bridges from the fiery flood arose Growing before his way; and on he goes, And drives the thundering Chariot

wheels along, 30

At once o'er all the roads of Padalon.

3

Silent and motionless remain The Asuras on their bed of pain, Waiting, with breathless hope, the great event.

All Hell was hush'd in dread, Such awe that omnipresent coming spread; Nor had its voice been heard, though all its rout

Innumerable had lifted up one shout;
Nor if the infernal firmament
Had in one unimaginable burst
40
Spent its collected thunders, had the

Been audible, such louder terrors went
Before his forms substantial. Round
about [wide,

The presence scattered lightnings far and
That quench'd on every side,
With their intensest blaze, the feebler fire
Of Padalon, even as the stars go out.

When, with prodigious light, Some blazing meteor fills the astonish'd night.

4

The Diamond City shakes! 50
The adamantine Rock
Is loosen'd with the shock!
From its foundation moved, it heaves
and quakes; [dust;
The brazen portals crumbling fall to
Prone fall the Giant Guards
Beneath the Aullays crush'd;

On, on, through Yamenpur, their thundering feet
Speed from all points to Vamen's

Speed from all points to Yamen's Judgement-seat.

And lo! where multiplied,
Behind, before him, and on every side,
Wielding all weapons in his countless
hands,
61

Around the Lord of Hell Kehama stands!

Then too the Lord of Hell put forth his might:

Thick darkness, blacker than the blackest night,

Rose from their wrath, and veil'd The unutterable fight.

The power of Fate and Sacrifice prevail'd,

And soon the strife was done.

Then did the Man-God re-assume
His unity, absorbing into one
70
The consubstantiate shapes; and as
the gloom

Opened, fallen Yamen on the ground was seen.

His neck beneath the conquering Rajah's feet,

Who on the marble tomb Had his triumphal seat.

5

Silent the Man-Almighty sate; a smile

Gleam'd on his dreadful lips, the while

Dallying with power, he paused from following up

His conquest, as a man in social hour Sips of the grateful cup,

Again and yet again with curious taste

Searching its subtle flavour ere he drink:

Even so Kehama now forbore his haste;

Having within his reach whate'er he sought,

On his own haughty power he seem'd to muse,

Pampering his arrogant heart with silent thought.

Before him stood the Golden Throne in sight,

Right opposite; he could not choose but see

Nor seeing choose but wonder. Who are ye

Who bear the Golden Throne tormented there?

He cried; for whom doth Destiny prepare

The Imperial Seat, and why are ye but Three?

6

FIRST STATUE

I of the Children of Mankind was first, Me miserable! who, adding store to store, [accurst,

Heapt up superfluous wealth; and now For ever I the frantic crime deplore.

SECOND STATUE

I o'er my Brethren of Mankind the first Usurping power, set up a throne sublime, A King and Conqueror: therefore

thus accurst.

For ever I in vain repent the crime.
THIRD STATUE

I on the Children of Mankind the first, In God's most holy name, imposed a tale Of impious falsehood; therefore thus accurst.

For ever I in vain the crime bewail.

7

Even as thou here beholdest us, Here we have stood, tormented thus, Such countless ages, that they seem to be

Long as eternity,

And still we are but Three.

A Fourth will come to share 110 Our pain, at yonder vacant corner bear His portion of the burthen, and compleat

The Golden Throne for Yamen's Judgement-seat. [be

Thus hath it been appointed: he must Equal in guilt to us, the guilty Three.

Kehama, come! too long we wait for thee!

Thereat, with one accord,
The Three took up the word, like
choral song,

Come Rajah! Man-God! Earth's Almighty Lord!

Kehama, come! we wait for thee too long.

9

A short and sudden laugh of wondering pride [reply Burst from him in his triumph: to

Scornful he deign'd not; but with alter'd eye

Wherein some doubtful meaning seem'd to lie, [cried,

He turn'd to Kailyal. Maiden, thus he I need not bid thee see

How vain it is to strive with Fate's decree, [from me,

When hither thou hast fled to fly
And lo! even here thou find'st me at
thy side.

Mine thou must be, being doom'd with me to share 130

The Amreeta-cup of immortality; Yea, by Myself I swear,

It hath been thus appointed. Joyfully Join then thy hand and heart and will with mine,

Nor at such glorious destiny repine, Nor in thy folly more provoke my wrath divine.

10

She answer'd; I have said. It must not be!

Almighty as thou art,
Thou hast put all things underneath
thy feet;

But still the resolute heart And virtuous will are free.

Never, oh! never...can there be [me.

Communion, Rajah, between thee and

11

Once more, quoth he, I urge, and once alone.

Thou seest you Golden Throne,
Where I anon shall set thee by my side;
Take thou thy seat thereon,
Kehama's willing bride,

And I will place the Kingdoms of the World

Beneath thy Father's feet, 150 Appointing him the King of mortal men:

Else underneath that Throne, The Fourth supporter he shall stand and groan;

Prayers will be vain to move my mercy then.

12

Again the Virgin answer'd, I have said!

Ladurlad caught her in his proud
embrace,

While on his neck she hid In agony her face.

13

Bring forth the Amreeta-cup! Kehama cried 159

To Yamen, rising sternly in his pride.

It is within the Marble Sepulchre,
The vanquish'd Lord of Padalon replied,
Bid it be open'd. Give thy treasure up!
Exclaim'd the Man-Almighty to the
Tomb.

And at his voice and look
The massy fabric shook, and open'd
wide.

A huge Anatomy was seen reclined Within its marble womb. Give me the Cup!

Again Kehama cried; no other charm Was needed than that voice of stern command.

From his repose the ghastly form arose, Put forth his bony and gigantic arm, And gave the Amreeta to the Rajah's

Take! drink! with accents dread the Spectre said.

For thee and Kailyal hath it been assign'd,

Ye only of the Children of Mankind.

14

Then was the Man-Almighty's heart elate;

This is the consummation! he exclaim'd;
Thus have I triumphed over Death
and Fate. 179

Now, Seeva! look to thine abode! Henceforth, on equal footing we engage, Alike immortal now, and we shall wage Our warfare, God to God! Joy fill'd his impious soul,

And to his lips he raised the fatal bowl.

15

Thus long the Glendoveer had stood Watching the wonders of the eventful hour,

Amazed but undismay'd; for in his heart

Faith, overcoming fear, maintain'd its power.

Nor had that faith abated, when the God 190

Of Padalon was beaten down in fight;
For then he look'd to see the heavenly
might [now

Of Seeva break upon them. But when He saw the Amreeta in Kehama's hand, An impulse which defied all self-

command

In that extremity
Stung him, and he resolved to seize
the cup,

And dare the Rajah's force in Seeva's sight.

Forward he sprung to tempt the unequal fray,

When lo! the Anatomy, 200
With warning arm, withstood his
desperate way,

And from the Golden Throne the fiery Three

Again, in one accord, renew'd their song, [long.

Kehama, come! we wait for thee too

16

O fool of drunken hope and frantic vice!

Madman! to seek for power beyond thy scope

Of knowledge, and to deem Less than Omniscience could suffice To wield Omnipotence! O fool, to dream

That immortality could be 210 The meed of evil!.. yea thou hast it now.

Victim of thine own wicked heart's device.

Thou hast thine object now, and now must pay the price.

17

He did not know the holy mystery Of that divinest cup, that as the lips Which touch it, even such its quality. Good or malignant: Madman! and he thinks

The blessed prize is won, and joyfully he drinks.

18

Then Seeva open'd on the Accursed One His Eye of Anger: upon him alone The wrath-beam fell. He shudders . . but too late: 221

The deed is done,

The dreadful liquor works the will of Fate.

Immortal he would be. Immortal he is made; but through his veins

Torture at once and immortality, A stream of poison doth the Amreeta

And while within the burning anguish flows.

His outward body glows Like molten ore, beneath the avenging Eye, 230

Doom'd thus to live and burn eternally.

19

The fiery Three, Beholding him, set up a fiendish cry.

A song of jubilee: flong Come, Brother, come! they sung; too Have we expected thee.

Henceforth we bear no more The unequal weight; Come, Brother, we are Four!

Vain his almightiness, for mightier pain Subdued all power: pain ruled supreme alone:

And yielding to the bony hand The unemptied cup, he moved toward the Throne. Istand.

And at the vacant corner took his Behold the Golden Throne at length complete. [ment-seat.

And Yamen silently ascends the Judge-

For two alone, of all mankind, to me The Amreeta Cup was given, Then said the Anatomy;

The Man hath drunk, the Woman's turn is next.

Come, Kailyal, come, receive thy doom, And do the Will of Heaven! . . 251 Wonder, and Fear, and Awe at once perplext

The mortal Maiden's heart, but over all Hope rose triumphant. With a trembling hand,

Obedient to his call,

She took the fated Cup; and, lifting up Her eyes, where holy tears began to swell, Is it not your command,

Ye heavenly Powers? as on her knees she fell.

The pious Virgin cried; Ye know my innocent will, my heart sincere.

Ye govern all things still, And wherefore should I fear ! 22

She said, and drank. The Eye of Mercy beam'd

Upon the Maid: a cloud of fragrance steam'd

Like incense-smoke, as all her mortal frame

Dissolved beneath the potent agency
Of that mysterious draught; such
quality,

From her pure touch, the fated Cup partook.

Like one entranced she knelt, 270
Feeling her body melt

Till all but what was heavenly pass'd away:

Yet still she felt

Her Spirit strong within her, the same heart,

With the same loves, and all her heavenly part

Unchang'd, and ripen'd to such perfect state [Earth.

In this miraculous birth, as here on Dimly our holiest hopes anticipate.

23

Mine! mine! with rapturous joy Ereenia cried,

Immortal now, and yet not more divine: 280

Mine, mine, . . for ever mine!

The immortal Maid replied,

For ever, ever, thine!

24

Then Yamen said, O thou to whom by Fate,

Alone of all mankind, this lot is given, Daughter of Earth, but now the Child of Heaven!

Go with thy heavenly Mate,
Partaker now of his immortal bliss;
Go to the Swerga Bowers,
And there recall the hours 290
Of endless happiness.

25

But that sweet Angel, for she still retain'd

Her human loves and human piety, As if reluctant at the God's commands, Linger'd, with anxious eye

Upon her Father fix'd, and spread her hands

Toward him wistfully.

Go! Yamen said, nor cast that look behind

Upon Ladurlad at this parting hour, For thou shalt find him in thy Mother's Bower. 300

26

The Car, for Carmala his word obey'd, Moved on, and bore away the Maid.

While from the Golden Throne the Lord of Death

With love benignant on Ladurlad smiled,

And gently on his head his blessing laid.

As sweetly as a Child,

Whom neither thought disturbs nor care encumbers,

Tired with long play, at close of summer day,

Lies down and slumbers,

Even thus as sweet a boon of sleep partaking, 310

By Yamen blest, Ladurlad sunk to

Blessed that sleep! more blessed was the waking!

For on that night a heavenly morning broke.

The light of heaven was round him when he woke,

And in the Swerga, in Yedillian's Bower,

All whom he loved he met, to part no more.

RODERICK. THE LAST OF THE GOTHS:

A TRAGIC POEM.

'Tanto acrior apud majores, sicut virtutibus gloria, ita flagitiis poenitentia, fuit. Sed haec aliaque, ex veteri memoria petita, quotiens res locusque exempla recti, aut solatia mali, poscet, haud absurde memorabimus.'—Taciti Hist, lib. iii, c. 51.

TO GROSVENOR CHARLES BEDFORD. THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED.

IN LASTING MEMORIAL OF A LONG AND UNINTERRUPTED FRIENDSHIP, BY HIS OLD SCHOOLFELLOW,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

.. ' As the ample Moon, In the deep stillness of a summer even Rising behind a thick and lofty Grove, Burns like an unconsuming fire of light In the green trees; and kindling on all Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil Into a substance glorious as her own, Yea, with her own incorporated, by power

Capacious and serene: Like power abides In Man's celestial Spirit; Virtue thus Sets forth and magnifies herself; thus feeds A calm, a beautiful and silent fire, From the incumbrances of mortal life, From error, disappointment, . . nay from guilt;

And sometimes, so relenting Justice wills, From palpable oppressions of Despair.' Wordsworth.

PREFACE.

some years before their overthrow is very imperfectly known. It is, however, apparent, that the enmity between the royal families of Chindasuintho and Wamba was one main cause of the destruction of the kingdom, the latter party having assisted in betraying their country to the Moors for the gratification of their own revenge. Theodofred and Favila were younger sons of King Chindasuintho; King Witiza, who was of Wamba's family, put out the eyes of Theodofred, and murdered Favila, at the instigation of that Chieftain's wife.

THE history of the Wisi-Goths for the son of Favila, and afterwards the founder of the Spanish monarchy, was driven into exile. Roderick, the son of Theodofred, recovered the throne, and put out Witiza's eyes in vengeance for his father; but he spared Orpas, the brother of the tyrant, as being a Priest, and Ebba and Sisibert, the two sons of Witiza, by Pelayo's mother. It may be convenient thus briefly to premise these circumstances of an obscure portion of history, with which few readers can be supposed to be familiar; and a list of the principal persons who are introduced, or spoken of, may as prowith whom he lived in adultery. Pelayo, perly be prefixed to a Poem as to a Play.

WITIZA, King of the Wisi-Goths; dethroned and blinded by Roderick. THEODOFRED, son of King Chindasuintho, blinded by King Witiza. FAVILA, his brother; put to death by Witiza. The Wife of Favila, Witiza's adulterous
mistress.
(These four persons are dead before the action of the poem commences.)
75
RODERICK, the last King of the Wisi-
Goths: son of Theodofred.
PELAYO, the founder of the Spanish Monarchy: son of Favila.
GAUDIOSA, his wife.
Guisla, his sister.
FAVILA, his son.
HERMESIND, his daughter.
RUSILLA, widow of Theodofred, and
mother of Roderick.
COUNT PEDRO, powerful Lords of Can-
COUNT EUDON, tabria.
ALPHONSO, Count Pedro's son, after-
wards King.
URBAN, Archbishop of Toledo.
ROMANO, a Monk of the Caulian
Schools, near Merida.
ABDALAZIZ, the Moorish Governor of Spain.
EGILONA, formerly the wife of
Roderick, now of Abdalaziz.

ABULCACEM,	1
ALCAHMAN	
AYUB,	- moorish Uniels.
IBRAHIM,	
MAGUED,	

ORPAS, brother to Witiza, and formerly Archbishop of Seville, now a renegade.

Sisibert,..... sons of Witiza and of Pelayo's mother. Numacian, a renegade, governor of Gegio.

COUNT JULIAN, . a powerful Lord among the Wisi-Goths, now a renegade.

FLORINDA, his daughter, violated by King Roderick.

Adosinda, daughter of the Governor of Auria.

ODOAR, Abbot of St. Felix. SIVERIAN, Roderick's foster-father. FAVINIA, Count Pedro's wife.

The four latter persons are imaginary. All the others are mentioned in history. I ought, however, to observe that Romano is a creature of monkish legends; that the name of Pelayo's sister has not been preserved; and that that of Roderick's mother, Ruscilo, has been altered to Rusilla, for the sake of euphony.

RODERICK. THE LAST OF THE GOTHS.

RODERICK AND ROMANO

Long had the crimes of Spain cried out to Heaven:

At length the measure of offence was full. Count Julian call'd the invaders; not because

Inhuman priests with unoffending blood Had stain'd their country; not because a voke

Of iron servitude oppress'd and gall'd The children of the soil; a private wrong Roused the remorseless Baron. Mad to wreak

His vengeance for his violated child On Roderick's head, in evil hour for In whom all turbulent vices were let Spain, IO

For that unhappy daughter and himself, Desperate apostate . . on the Moors he call'd;

And like a cloud of locusts, whom the South

Wafts from the plains of wasted Africa, The Musselmen upon Iberia's shore

Descend. A countless multitude they came:

Syrian, Moor, Saracen, Greek renegade, Persian and Copt and Tatar, in one bond Of erring faith conjoin'd, . . strong in the youth

And heat of zeal, . . a dreadful brotherhood.

loose:

While Conscience, with their impious creed accurst,

Drunk as with wine, had sanctified to them

All bloody, all abominable things.

Thou, Calpe, saw'st their coming; ancient Rock

Renown'd, no longer now shalt thou be call'd

From Gods and Heroes of the years of yore,

Kronos, or hundred-handed Briareus, Bacchus or Hercules; but doom'd to bear

The name of thy new conqueror, and thenceforth 30

To stand his everlasting monument.

Thou saw'st the dark-blue waters flash before

Their ominous way, and whiten round their keels;

Their swarthy myriads darkening o'er thy sands.

There on the beach the Misbelievers spread

Their banners, flaunting to the sun and breeze;

Fair shone the sun upon their proud array,

White turbans, glittering armour, shields engrail'd

With gold, and seymitars of Syrian steel; And gently did the breezes, as in sport, Curl their long flags outrolling, and display

The blazon'd scrolls of blasphemy. Too soon

The gales of Spainfrom that unhappyland Wafted, as from an open charnel-house, The taint of death; and that bright sun, from fields

Of slaughter, with the morning dew drew up

Corruption through the infected atmosphere. Then fell the kingdom of the Goths; their hour

Was come, and Vengeance, long withheld, went loose. 49 Famine and Pestilence had wasted them,

And Treason, like an old and eating sore, Consumed the bones and sinews of their strength;

And worst of enemies, their Sins were arm'd

Against them. Yet the sceptre from their hands

Pass'd not away inglorious, nor was shame

Left for their children's lasting heritage; Eight summer days, from morn till latest eve,

The fatal fight endured, till perfidy
Prevailing to their overthrow, they sunk
Defeated, not dishonour'd. On the
banks

Of Chrysus, Roderick's royal car was found.

His battle-horse Orelio, and that helm Whose horns, amid the thickest of the fray Eminent, had mark'd his presence. Did the stream

Receive him with the undistinguish'd dead,

Christian and Moor, who clogg'd its course that day?

So thought the Conqueror, and from that day forth,

Memorial of his perfect victory,

He bade the river bear the name of Joy. So thought the Goths; they said no prayer for him,

For him no service sung, nor mourning made.

But charged their crimes upon his head, and curs'd

His memory.

Bravely in that eight-days' fight The King had striven, . . for victory first, while hope

- Remain'd, then desperately in search of death.
- The arrows pass'd him by to right and Stole, like a thief in darkness, from the
- The spear-point pierced him not, the scymitar
- Glanced from his helmet. Is the shield of Heaven.
- Wretch that I am, extended over me? Cried Roderick; and he dropt Orelio's reins.
- And threw his hands aloft in frantic praver. . .
- Death is the only mercy that I crave, Death soon and short, death and forgetfulness!
- Aloud he cried: but in his inmost heart There answer'd him a secret voice, that
- Of righteousness and judgement after
- And God's redeeming love, which fain would save
- The guilty soul alive. 'Twas agony,
- And yet 'twas hope; . . a momentary light.
- That flash'd through utter darkness on the Cross
- To point salvation, then left all within Dark as before. Fear, never felt till then.
- Sudden and irresistible as stroke
- Of lightning, smote him. From his horse he dropt,
- Whether with human impulse, or by Heaven
- Struck down, he knew not; loosen'd from his wrist
- The sword-chain, and let fall the sword, whose hilt
- Clung to his palm a moment ere it fell, Glued there with Moorish gore. His roval robe. 99
- His horned helmet and enamell'd mail, He cast aside, and taking from the dead

- A peasant's garment, in those weeds involved
- field.
 - Evening closed round to favour him. All night
- He fled, the sound of battle in his ear Ringing, and sights of death before his eves.
- With forms more horrible of eager fiends That seem'd to hover round, and gulphs of fire
- Opening beneath his feet. At times the groan
- Of some poor fugitive, who, bearing with him
- His mortal hurt, had fallen beside the
- Roused him from these dread visions, and he call'd
- In answering groans on his Redeemer's
- That word the only prayer that pass'd his lips
- Or rose within his heart. Then would he see
- The Cross whereon a bleeding Saviour
- Who call'd on him to come and cleanse his soul
- In those all-healing streams, which from his wounds.
- As from perpetual springs, for ever flow'd.
- No hart e'er panted for the waterbrooks
- As Roderick thirsted there to drink and
- But Hell was interposed; and worse than Hell . .
- Yea to his eyes more dreadful than the fiends
- Who flock'd like hungry ravens round his head. . .

Florinda stood between, and warn'd him off

With her abhorrent hands, . . that agony Still in her face, which, when the deed was done.

Inflicted on her ravisher the curse That it invoked from Heaven. . . Oh

what a night

Of waking horrors! Nor when morning came

Did the realities of light and day

Bring aught of comfort; wheresoe'er he went

The tidings of defeat had gone before: And leaving their defenceless homes to seek

What shelter walls and battlements might yield,

Old men with feeble feet, and tottering babes.

And widows with their infants in their arms.

Hurried along. Nor royal festival,

Nor sacred pageant, with like multitudes E'er fill'd the public way. All whom

the sword Had spared were here; bed-rid infirmity Alone was left behind; the cripple plied His crutches, with her child of yester-

dav The mother fled, and she whose hour

was come

Fell by the road.

Less dreadful than this view Of outward suffering which the day disclosed.

Had night and darkness seem'd to Roderick's heart.

With all their dread creations. From the throng

He turn'd aside, unable to endure This burthen of the general woe; nor

walls. 150 Nor towers, nor mountain fastnesses he | There from his childhood up to ripe old sought,

A firmer hold his spirit yearn'd to find, A rock of surer strength. Unknowing where.

Straight through the wild he hasten'd on all day.

And with unslacken'd speed was travelling still

When evening gather'd round. Seven days from morn

Till night he travell'd thus; the forest

The fig-grove by the fearful husbandman Forsaken to the spoiler, and the vines,

Where fox and household dog together

Fed on the vintage, gave him food; the hand

Of Heaven was on him, and the agony Which wrought within, supplied a strength beyond

All natural force of man.

When the eighth eve Was come, he found himself on Ana's banks.

Fast by the Caulian Schools. the hour

Of vespers, but no vesper bell was heard, Nor other sound, than of the passing stream.

Or stork, who flapping with wide wing the air.

Sought her broad nest upon the silent

Brethren and pupils thence alike had fled

To save themselves within the embattled walls

Of neighbouring Merida. One aged

Alone was left behind; he would not

The sacred spot beloved, for having served

age

God's holy altar, it became him now, He thought, before that altar to await The merciless misbelievers, and lay down

His life, a willing martyr. So he staid When all were gone, and duly fed the lamps, 181

And kept devotedly the altar drest, And duly offer'd up the sacrifice.

Four days and nights he thus had pass'd alone,

In such high mood of saintly fortitude, That hope of Heaven became a heavenly joy;

And now at evening to the gate he went If he might spy the Moors, . . for it seem'd long

To tarry for his crown.

Before the Cross

Roderick had thrown himself; his body raised, 190

Half kneeling, half at length he lay; his arms

Embraced its foot, and from his lifted face

Tears streaming down bedew'd the senseless stone.

He had not wept till now, and at the gush

Of these first tears, it seem'd as if his heart,

From a long winter's icy thrall let loose, Had open'd to the genial influences Of Heaven. In attitude, but not in act Of prayer he lay; an agony of tears Was all his soul could offer. When the

Monk 200 Beheld him suffering thus, he raised him

And took him by the arm, and led him in; And there before the altar, in the name Of Him whose bleeding image there was hung,

Spake comfort, and adjured him in that name

There to lay down the burthen of his sins.

Lo! said Romano, I am waiting here The coming of the Moors, that from their hands

My spirit may receive the purple robe
Of martyrdom, and rise to claim its
crown.

That God who willeth not the sinner's death

Hath led thee hither. Threescore years and five,

Even from the hour when I, a five-years' child,

Enter'd the schools, have I continued here

And served the altar: not in all those years

Hath such a contrite and a broken heart Appear'd before me. O my brother, Heaven

Hath sent thee for thy comfort, and for

That my last earthly act may reconcile A sinner to his God.

Then Roderick knelt 220 Before the holy man, and strove to speak.

Thou seest, he cried, . . thou seest, . . but memory

And suffocating thoughts repress'd the word.

And shudderings, like an ague fit, from head

To foot convulsed him; till at length, subduing

His nature to the effort, he exclaim'd, Spreading his hands and lifting up his face.

As if resolved in penitence to bear

A human eye upon his shame, . . Thou seest

Roderick the Goth! That name would have sufficed 230
To tell its whole abhorred history:

He not the less pursued, . . the ravisher, The cause of all this ruin! Having said, In the same posture motionless he knelt, Arms straighten'd down, and hands outspread, and eyes

Raised to the Monk, like one who from his voice

Awaited life or death.

All night the old man
Pray'd with his penitent, and minister'd
Unto the wounded soul, till he infused
A healing hope of mercy that allay'd 240
Its heat of anguish. But Romano saw
What strong temptations of despair
beset,

And how he needed in this second birth, Even like a yearling child, a fosterer's care.

Father in Heaven, he cried, thy will be done!

Surely I hoped that I this day should sing

Hosannahs at thy throne; but thou hast yet

Work for thy servant here. He girt his loins,

And from her altar took with reverent hands

Our Lady's image down: In this, quoth he, 250

We have our guide and guard and comforter,

The best provision for our perilous way. Fear not but we shall find a restingplace,

The Almighty's hand is on us.

They went forth,

They cross'd the stream, and when Romano turn'd

For his last look toward the Caulian towers.

Far off the Moorish standards in the light

Of morn were glittering, where the miscreant host

Toward the Lusitanian capital

To lay their siege advanced; the eastern breeze 260

Bore to the fearful travellers far away The sound of horn and tambour o'er the plain.

All day they hasten'd, and when evening fell

Sped toward the setting sun, as if its line Of glory came from Heaven to point their course.

But feeble were the feet of that old man . For such a weary length of way; and now

Being pass'd the danger (for in Merida Sacaru long in resolute defence

Withstood the tide of war,) with easier pace 270

The wanderers journey'd on; till having cross'd

Rich Tagus, and the rapid Zezere,

They from Albardos' hoary height beheld

Pine-forest, fruitful vale, and that fair lake

Where Alcoa, mingled there with Baza's stream,

Rests on its passage to the western sea, That sea the aim and boundary of their toil.

The fourth week of their painful pilgrimage

Was full, when they arrived where from the land

A rocky hill, rising with steep ascent,

O'erhung the glittering beach; there on the top 281

A little lowly hermitage they found,

And a rude Cross, and at its foot a grave,

Bearing no name, nor other monument.

Where better could they rest than here,
where faith

And secret penitence and happiest death

Had bless'd the spot, and brought good Angels down,

And open'd as it were a way to Heaven? Behind them was the desert, offering fruit

And water for their need: on either side 290

The white sand sparkling to the sun; in front,

Great Ocean with its everlasting voice, As in perpetual jubilee, proclaim'd,

The wonders of the Almighty, filling thus

The pauses of their fervent orisons.

Where better could the wanderers rest than here?

II. RODERICK IN SOLITUDE

Twelve months they sojourn'd in their solitude,

And then beneath the burthen of old age Romano sunk. No brethren were there here

To spread the sackcloth, and with ashes strew

That penitential bed, and gather round To sing his requiem, and with prayer and psalm

Assist him in his hour of agony.

He lay on the bare earth, which long had been

His only couch; beside him Roderick knelt,

Moisten'd from time to time his blacken'd lips,

Received a blessing with his latest breath.

Then closed his eyes, and by the nameless grave

Of the fore-tenant of that holy place Consign'd him earth to earth.

began

Two graves are here, And Roderick transverse at their feet To break the third. In all his intervals Of prayer, save only when he search'd the woods

And fill'd the water-cruise, he labour'd there:

And when the work was done and he had laid

Himself at length within its narrow sides
And measured it, he shook his head to
think
22

There was no other business now for him.

Poor wretch, thy bed is ready, he exclaim'd,

And would that night were come!.. It was a task,

All gloomy as it was, which had beguiled The sense of solitude; but now he felt The burthen of the solitary hours:

The silence of that lonely hermitage Lay on him like a spell; and at the voice

Of his own prayers, he started half aghast.

Then too as on Romano's grave he sate And pored upon his own, a natural thought

Arose within him, . . well might he have spared

That useless toil; the sepulchre would be

No hiding place for him; no Christian hands

Were here who should compose his decent corpse

And cover it with earth. There he might drag

His wretched body at its passing hour, But there the Sea-Birds of her heritage Would rob the worm, or peradventure seize.

Ere death had done its work, their helpless prey.

Even now they did not fear him: when he walk'd

Beside them on the beach, regardlessly They saw his coming; and their whirring wings

Upon the height had sometimes fann'd his cheek.

As if, being thus alone, humanity Had lost its rank, and the prerogative Of man were done away.

For his lost crown And sceptre never had he felt a thought Of pain; repentance had no pangs to

For trifles such as these, . . the loss of these

Was a cheap penalty; . . that he had fallen

Down to the lowest depth of wretched-

His hope and consolation. But to lose His human station in the scale of things, . .

To see brute nature scorn him, and renounce

Its homage to the human form divine; ... Had then Almighty vengeance thus reveal'd

His punishment, and was he fallen indeed

Below fallen man, below redemption's reach. . .

Made lower than the beasts, and like the

To perish!.. Such temptations troubled him

By day, and in the visions of the night; And even in sleep he struggled with the thought,

And waking with the effort of his pravers

The dream assail'd him still.

A wilder form

Sometimes his poignant penitence assumed.

vala

Of calmer passion, or exhausted rest; When floating back upon the tide of thought

Remembrance to a self-excusing strain Beguiled him, and recall'd in long array The sorrows and the secret impulses Which to the abvss of wretchedness and

guilt

Led their unwary victim. The evil hour Return'd upon him, when reluctantly Yielding to worldly counsel his assent, In wedlock to an ill-assorted mate

He gave his cold unwilling hand: then came

The disappointment of the barren bed, The hope deceived, the soul dissatisfied, Home without love, and privacy from which

Delight was banish'd first, and peace too

Departed. Was it strange that when he met

A heart attuned, . . a spirit like his own, Of lofty pitch, yet in affection mild, And tender as a youthful mother's joy...

Oh was it strange if at such sympathy The feelings which within his breast repell'd

And chill'd had shrunk, should open forth like flowers

After cold winds of night, when gentle gales

Restore the genial sun? If all were known.

Would it indeed be not to be forgiven? . . (Thus would he lay the unction to his soul,)

If all were truly known, as Heaven knows

Heaven that is merciful as well as just, . . A passion slow and mutual in its growth, Pure as fraternal love, long self-conceal'd.

Starting with force revived from inter- And when confess'd in silence, long controll'd:

Treacherous occasion, human frailty, fear 100 than

Of endless separation. worse death. . .

The purpose and the hope with which the Fiend

Tempted, deceived, and madden'd him; . . but then

As at a new temptation would he start, Shuddering beneath the intolerable shame.

And clench in agony his matted hair: While in his soul the perilous thought arose.

How easy 'twere to plunge where yonder

Invited him to rest.

Oh for a voice

Of comfort, . . for a ray of hope from Heaven!

A hand that from these billows of despair May reach and snatch him ere he sink engulph'd!

At length, as life when it hath lain long time

Oppress'd beneath some grievous maladv.

Seems to rouse up with re-collected strength.

And the sick man doth feel within him-

A second spring; so Roderick's better

Arose to save him. Lo! the western sun Flames o'er the broad Atlantic; on the

Of glowing ocean rests; retiring then Draws with it all its rays, and sudden night

Fills the whole cope of heaven. The penitent

Knelt by Romano's grave, and falling prone.

mould.

Father! he cried; Companion! only friend.

When all beside was lost! thou too art

And the poor sinner whom from utter death

Thy providential hand preserved, once

Totters upon the gulph. I am too weak For solitude, . . too vile a wretch to bear This everlasting commune with myself. The Tempter hath assail'd me: my own heart

Is leagued with him: Despair hath laid the nets

To take my soul, and Memory like a ghost.

Haunts me, and drives me to the toils. O Saint.

While I was blest with thee, the hermitage

Was my sure haven! Look upon me still.

For from thy heavenly mansion thou canst see

The suppliant; look upon thy child in Christ.

Is there no other way for penitence? 140 I ask not martyrdom; for what am I That I should pray for triumphs, the fit meed

Of a long life of holy works like thine; Or how should I presumptuously aspire To wear the heavenly crown resign'd by thee.

For my poor sinful sake? Oh point me thou

Some humblest, painfulest, severest path. . .

Some new austerity, unheard of yet

In Syrian fields of glory, or the sands Of holiest Egypt. Let me bind my

brow Clasp'd with extended arms the funeral | With thorns, and barefoot seek Jerusalem.

Tracking the way with blood; there day by day

Inflict upon this guilty flesh the scourge, Drink vinegar and gall, and for my bed Hang with extended limbs upon the Cross.

A nightly crucifixion ! . . any thing Of action, difficulty, bodily pain,

Labour, and outward suffering, . . any thing

But stillness and this dreadful solitude! Romano! Father! let me hear thy voice

In dreams, O sainted Soul! or from the

Speak to thy penitent; even from the grave

Thine were a voice of comfort.

Thus he cried.

Easing the pressure of his burthen'd heart

With passionate prayer; thus pour'd his spirit forth,

Till with the long impetuous effort spent His spirit fail'd, and laying on the grave His weary head as on a pillow, sleep

Fell on him. He had pray'd to hear a voice

Of consolation, and in dreams a voice Of consolation came. Roderick, it said, . . 171

Roderick, my poor, unhappy, sinful

Jesus have mercy on thee! . . Not if Heaven

Had opened, and Romano, visible In his beatitude, had breathed that

prayer; . . Not if the grave had spoken, had it pierced

So deeply in his soul, nor wrung his heart With such compunctious visitings, nor given

So quick, so keen a pang. It was that Is wither'd; . . Chiefs of Spain, but voice

Which sung his fretful infancy to sleep So patiently: which soothed his childish griefs.

Counsell'd, with anguish and prophetic tears.

His headstrong youth. And lo! his Mother stood

Before him in the vision; in those weeds Which never from the hour when to the grave

She follow'd her dear lord Theodofred Rusilla laid aside: but in her face

A sorrow that bespake a heavier load At heart, and more unmitigated woe, . .

Yea a more mortal wretchedness than when

Witiza's ruffians and the red-hot brass Had done their work, and in her arms she held

Her eyeless husband; wiped away the sweat

Which still his tortures forced from every pore;

Cool'd his scorch'd lids with medicinal herbs.

And pray'd the while for patience for herself

And him, and pray'd for vengeance too, and found

Best comfort in her curses. In his dream.

Groaning he knelt before her to beseech Her blessing, and she raised her hands to lay

A benediction on him. But those hands Were chain'd, and casting a wild look around.

With thrilling voice she cried, Will no one break

These shameful fetters? Pedro, Theudemir.

Athanagild, where are ye? Roderick's arm

where are ye?

And thou, Pelayo, thou our surest hope, Dost thou too sleep?.. Awake, Pelayo! ..up!..

Why tarriest thou, Deliverer? . . But with that

She broke her bonds, and lo! her form was changed! 210

Radiant in arms she stood! a bloody Cross

Gleam'd on her breast-plate, in her shield display'd

Erect a lion ramp'd; her helmed head Rose like the Berecynthian Goddess crown'd

With towers, and in her dreadful hand the sword

Red as a fire-brand blazed. Anon the tramp

Of horsemen, and the din of multitudes Moving to mortal conflict, rang around; The battle-song, the clang of sword and shield,

War-cries and tumult, strife and hate and rage, 220

Blasphemous prayers, confusion, agony, Rout and pursuit and death; and over all

The shout of victory. . . Spain and Victory!

Roderick, as the strong vision master'd him,

Rush'd to the fight rejoicing: starting then,

As his own effort burst the charm of sleep,

He found himself upon that lonely grave In moonlight and in silence. But the dream

Wrought in him still; for still he felt his heart

Pant, and his wither'd arm was trembling still; 230

And still that voice was in his ear which call'd

On Jesus for his sake.

Oh, might he hear
That actual voice! and if Rusilla
lived,...

If shame and anguish for his crimes not yet

Had brought her to the grave, . . sure she would bless

Her penitent child, and pour into his heart

Prayers and forgiveness, which, like precious balm,

Would heal the wounded soul. Nor to herself

Less precious, or less healing, would the voice

That spake forgiveness flow. She wept her son 240

For ever lost, cut off with all the weight Of unrepented sin upon his head,

Sin which had weigh'd a nation down.. what joy

To know that righteous Heaven had in its wrath

Remember'd mercy, and she yet might meet

The child whom she had borne, redeem'd, in bliss.

The sudden impulse of such thoughts confirmed

That unacknowledged purpose, which till now

Vainly had sought its end. He girt his loins.

Laid holiest Mary's image in a cleft 250 Of the rock, where, shelter'd from the elements.

It might abide till happier days came on, From all defilement safe; pour'd his last prayer

Upon Romano's grave, and kiss'd the earth

Which cover'd his remains, and wept as if

At long leave-taking, then began his way.

III. ADOSINDA

'Twas now the earliest morning; soon the Sun,

Rising above Albardos, pour'd his light Amid the forest, and with ray aslant Entering its depth, illumed the branch-

less pines,

Brighten'd their bark, tinged with a redder hue

Its rusty stains, and cast along the floor Long lines of shadow, where they rose erect

Like pillars of the temple. With slow foot

Roderick pursued his way; for penitence,

Remorse which gave no respite, and the long 10

And painful conflict of his troubled soul, Had worn him down. Now brighter thoughts arose,

And that triumphant vision floated still Before his sight with all her blazonry,

Her castled helm, and the victorious sword

That flash'd like lightning o'er the field of blood.

Sustain'd by thoughts like these, from morn till eve

He journey'd, and drew near Leyria's walls.

'Twas even-song time, but not a bell was heard;

Instead thereof, on her polluted towers, Bidding the Moors to their unhallow'd prayer, 21

The cryer stood, and with his sonorous voice

Fill'd the delicious vale where Lena winds Thro' groves and pastoral meads. The sound, the sight

Of turban, girdle, robe, and scymitar,
And tawny skins, awoke contending
thoughts

Of anger, shame, and anguish in the Goth:

The face of human-kind so long unseen Confused him now, and through the streets he went

With hagged mien, and countenance like one 30

Crazed or bewilder'd. All who met him turn'd,

And wonder'd as he pass'd. One stopt him short,

Put alms into his hand, and then desired In broken Gothic speech, the moonstruck man

To bless him. With a look of vacancy Roderick received the alms; his wandering eye

Fell on the money, and the fallen King, Seeing his own royal impress on the piece,

Broke out into a quick convulsive voice, That seem'd like laughter first, but ended soon 40

In hollow groans supprest; the Musselman

Shrunk at the ghastly sound, and magnified

The name of Allah as he hasten'd on.

A Christian woman spinning at her door Beheld him, and, with sudden pity touch'd,

She laid her spindle by, and running in Took bread, and following after call'd him back,

And placing in his passive hands the loaf,

She said, Christ Jesus for his mother's sake

Have mercy on thee! With a look that seem'd 50

Like idiotcy he heard her, and stood still.

Staring awhile; then bursting into tears Wept like a child, and thus relieved his heart, Full even to bursting else with swelling Open'd his scrip for him; the babe in thoughts.

So through the streets, and through the northern gate

Did Roderick, reckless of a restingplace,

With feeble vet with hurried step pursue His agitated way: and when he reach'd The open fields, and found himself alone Beneath the starry canopy of Heaven, The sense of solitude, so dreadful late, Was then repose and comfort. There he stopt 62

Beside a little rill, and brake the loaf; And shedding o'er that long untasted food

Painful but quiet tears, with grateful soul He breathed thanksgiving forth, then made his bed

On heath and myrtle.

But when he arose At day-break and pursued his way, his heart

Felt lighten'd that the shock of mingling

Among his fellow-kind was overpast; 70 And journeying on, he greeted whom he met

With such short interchange of benison As each to other gentle travellers give, Recovering thus the power of social speech

Which he had long disused. When hunger prest

He ask'd for alms: slight supplication served:

A countenance so pale and woe-begone Moved all to pity; and the marks it bore

Of rigorous penance and austerest life, With something too of majesty that still Appear'd amid the wreck, inspired a sense

Of reverence too. The goat-herd on Before Fernando's banner through her the hills

arms.

Affrighted at his visage, turn'd away, And clinging to the mother's neck in

Would yet again look up, and then again Shrink back, with cry renew'd. The bolder imps

Sporting beside the way, at his approach Brake off their games for wonder, and stood still

In silence; some among them cried, A Saint!

The village matron when she gave him food

Besought his prayers; and one entreated him

To lay his healing hands upon her child, For with a sore and hopeless malady

Wasting, it long had lain, . . and sure, she said.

He was a man of God.

Thus travelling on He pass'd the vale where wild Arunca pours

Its wintry torrents; and the happier site

Of old Conimbrica, whose ruin'd towers Bore record of the fierce Alani's wrath. Mondego too he cross'd, not yet renown'd

In poets' amorous lay; and left behind The walls at whose foundation pious hands

Of Priest and Monk and Bishop meekly toil'd, . .

So had the insulting Arian given com-

Those stately palaces and rich domains Were now the Moor's, and many a weary

Must Coimbra wear the misbeliever's yoke,

gate

Shall pass triumphant, and her hallow'd
Mosque
110
Behold the hero of Bivar receive
The knighthood which he glorified so oft
In his victorious fields. Oh, if the years
To come might then have risen on

Roderick's soul, How had they kindled and consoled his heart!..

What joy might Douro's haven then have given,

Whence Portugal, the faithful and the brave,

Shall take her name illustrious!.. what, those walls

Where Mumadona one day will erect Convent and town and towers, which shall become 120

The cradle of that famous monarchy! What joy might these prophetic scenes have given, . .

What ample vengeance on the Musselman,

Driven out with foul defeat, and made to feel

In Africa the wrongs he wrought to Spain;

And still pursued by that relentless sword,

Even to the farthest Orient, where his power

Received its mortal wound.

O years of pride!
In undiscoverable futurity,

Yet unevolved, your destined glories lay;

And all that Roderick in these fated scenes

Beheld, was grief and wretchedness, . . the waste

Of recent war, and that more mournful calm

Of joyless, helpless, hopeless servitude.

'Twas not the ruin'd walls of church or tower,

Cottage or hall or convent, black with smoke;

'Twas not the unburied bones, which where the dogs

And crows had strewn them, lay amid the field

Bleaching in sun or shower, that wrung his heart

With keenest anguish: 'twas when he beheld 140

The turban'd traitor show his shameless front

In the open eye of Heaven, . . the renegade,

On whose base brutal nature unredeem'd Even black apostacy itself could stamp No deeper reprobation, at the hour

Assign'd fall prostrate; and unite the names

Of God and the Blasphemer, . . impious prayer, . .

Most impious, when from unbelieving lips

The accursed utterance came. Then Roderick's heart

With indignation burnt, and then he long'd 150

To be a King again, that so, for Spain Betray'd and his Redeemer thus renounced,

He might inflict due punishment, and make

These wretches feel his wrath. But when he saw

The daughters of the land, . . who, as they went

With cheerful step to church, were wont to show

Their innocent faces to all passers' eyes Freely, and free from sin as when they look'd

In adoration and in praise to Heaven, . .

Now mask'd in Moorish mufflers, to the

Mosque

160

Holding uncompanied their jealous way,

His spirit seem'd at that unhappy sight To die away within him, and he too Would fain have died, so death could bring with it

Entire oblivion.

Rent with thoughts like these He reach'd that city, once the seat renown'd

Of Suevi kings, where, in contempt of Rome

Degenerate long, the North's heroic race Raised first a rival throne; now from its state

Of proud regality debased and fallen. 170 Still bounteous nature o'er the lovely vale,

Where like a Queen rose Bracara august, Pour'd forth her gifts profuse; perennial springs

Flow'd for her habitants, and genial suns,

With kindly showers to bless the happy clime,

Combined in vain their gentle influences; For patient servitude was there, who bow'd

His neck beneath the Moor, and silent grief

That eats into the soul. The walls and stones

Seem'd to reproach their dwellers; stately piles 180

Yet undecayed, the mighty monuments Of Roman pomp, Barbaric palaces,

And Gothic halls, where haughty Barons late

Gladden'd their faithful vassals with the feast

And flowing bowl, alike the spoiler's now.

Leaving these captive scenes behind, he crost

Cavado's silver current, and the banks Of Lima, through whose groves in after years. Mournful yet sweet, Diogo's amorous lute

Prolong'd its tuneful echoes. But when now 190

Beyond Arnoya's tributary tide,

He came where Minho roll'd its ampler stream

By Auria's ancient walls, fresh horrors met

His startled view; for prostrate in the dust

Those walls were laid, and towers and temples stood

Tottering in frightful ruins, as the flame Had left them black and bare; and through the streets,

All with the recent wreck of war bestrewn,

Helmet and turban, seymitar and sword, Christian and Moor in death promiscuous lay 200

Each where they fell; and blood-flakes, parch'd and crack'd

Like the dry slime of some receding flood;

And half-burnt bodies, which allured from far

The wolf and raven, and to impious food Tempted the houseless dog.

A thrilling pang,

A sweat like death, a sickness of the soul, Came over Roderick. Soon they pass'd away,

And admiration in their stead arose, Stern joy, and inextinguishable hope, With wrath, and hate, and sacred vengeance now

Indissolubly link'd. O valiant race, O people excellently brave, he cried, True Goths ye fell, and faithful to the

last; Though overpower'd, triumphant, and

in death
Unconquer'd! Holy be your memory!
Bless'd and glorious now and evermore

Of Hell had snatch'd me from the butchery,

The very horror of that monstrous thought

Saved me from madness; I was calm at once...

Yea comforted and reconciled to life: Hatred became to me the life of life, Its purpose and its power.

The glutted Moors

At length broke up. This hell-dog turn'd aside

Toward his home; we travell'd fast and far, 330

Till by a forest edge at eve he pitched His tents. I wash'd and ate at his command.

Forcing revolted nature; I composed My garments and bound up my scatter'd hair;

And when he took my hand, and to his couch

Would fain have drawn me, gently I retired

From that abominable touch, and said, Forbear to-night I pray thee, for this day

A widow, as thou seest me, am I made; Therefore, according to our law, must watch

And pray to-night. The loathsome villain paused

Ere he assented, then laid down to rest; While at the door of the pavilion, I

Knelt on the ground, and bowed my face to earth;

But when the neighbouring tents had ceased their stir.

The fires were out, and all were fast asleep,

Then I arose. The blessed Moon from Heaven

Lent me her holy light. I did not pray For strength, for strength was given me as I drew The scymitar, and standing o'er his couch, 350

Raised it in both my hands with steady aim

And smote his neck. Upward, as from a spring

When newly open'd by the husbandman,
The villain's life-blood spouted. Twice
I struck,

So making vengeance sure; then, praising God,

Retired amid the wood, and measured back

My patient way to Auria, to perform This duty which thou seest.

As thus she spake, Roderick intently listening had forgot

His crown, his kingdom, his calamities, His crimes, . . so like a spell upon the Goth

Her powerful words prevail'd. With open lips,

And eager ear, and eyes which, while they watch'd

Her features, caught the spirit that she breathed.

Mute and enrapt he stood, and motionless;

The vision rose before him; and that shout.

Which, like a thunder-peal, victorious Spain

Sent through the welkin, rung within his soul

Its deep prophetic echoes. On his brow The pride and power of former majesty Dawn'd once again, but changed and purified:

Duty and high heroic purposes

Now hallow'd it, and as with inward light Illumed his meagre countenance austere.

Awhile in silence Adosinda stood, Reading his alter'd visage and the thoughts Which thus transfigured him. Ay, she exclaim'd,

My tale hath moved thee! it might move the dead,

Quicken captivity's dead soul, and rouse

This prostrate country from her mortal trance: 380

Therefore I live to tell it; and for this Hath the Lord God Almighty given to me

A spirit not mine own and strength from Heaven;

Dealing with me as in the days of old With that Bethulian Matron when she saved

His people from the spoiler. What remains

But that the life which he hath thus preserved

I consecrate to him? Not veil'd and vow'd

To pass my days in holiness and peace; Nor yet between sepulchral walls immured, 390

Alive to penitence alone; my rule

He hath himself prescribed, and hath infused

A passion in this woman's breast, wherein

All passions and all virtues are combined;

Love, hatred, joy, and anguish, and despair,

And hope, and natural piety, and faith, Make up the mighty feeling. Call it not Revenge! thus sanctified and thus sublimed.

'Tis duty, 'tis devotion. Like the grace Of God, it came and saved me; and in it

Spain must have her salvation. In thy hands

Here, on the grave of all my family, I make my vow.

She said, and kneeling down, Placed within Roderick's palms her folded hands.

This life, she cried, I dedicate to God, Therewith to do him service in the way Which he hath shown. To rouse the land against

This impious, this intolerable yoke, . .

To offer up the invader's hateful blood, . .

This shall be my employ, my rule and rite, 410

Observances and sacrifice of faith;

For this I hold the life which he hath given,

A sacred trust; for this, when it shall suit

His service, joyfully will lay it down.

So deal with me as I fulfil the pledge,

O Lord my God, my Saviour and my Judge.

Then rising from the earth, she spread her arms.

And looking round with sweeping eyes exclaim'd.

Auria, and Spain, and Heaven receive

IV. THE MONASTERY OF ST. FELIX

Thus long had Roderick heard her powerful words

In silence, awed before her: but his heart

Was fill'd the while with swelling sympathy,

And now with impulse not to be restrain'd

The feeling overpower'd him. Hear me too,

Auria, and Spain, and Heaven! he cried; and thou

Who risest thus above mortality,
Sufferer and patriot, saint and heroine,
The servant and the chosen of the Lord,
For surely such thou art, . . receive in
me

The first-fruits of thy calling. Kneeling then,

And placing as he spake his hand in hers, As 'thou hast sworn, the royal Goth pursued,

Even so I swear; my soul hath found at length

Her rest and refuge; in the invader's blood

She must efface her stains of mortal sin, And in redeeming this lost land, work out Redemption for herself. Herein I place My penance for the past, my hope to come.

My faith and my good works; here offer up 20

All thoughts and passions of mine inmost heart,

My days and night, . . this flesh, this blood, this life,

Yea this whole being, do I here devote For Spain. Receive the vow, all Saints in Heaven,

And prosper its good end!.. Clap now your wings,

The Goth with louder utterance as he rose

Exclaim'd, . . clap now your wings exultingly,

Ye ravenous fowl of Heaven; and in your dens

Set up, ye wolves of Spain, a yell of joy; For, lo! a nation hath this day been sworn

To furnish forth your banquet; for a strife

Hath been commenced, the which from this day forth

Permits no breathing-time, and knows no end

Till in this land the last invader bow His neck beneath the exterminating sword.

Said I not rightly? Adosinda cried; The will which goads me on is not mine own.

'Tis from on high, . . yea, verily of Heaven!

But who art thou who hast profess'd with me,

My first sworn brother in the appointed rule?

Tell me thy name.

Ask any thing but that!
The fallen King replied. My name was lost

When from the Goths the sceptre pass'd away.

The nation will arise regenerate;

Strong in her second youth and beautiful,

And like a spirit which hath shaken off The clog of dull mortality, shall Spain Arise in glory. But for my good name No resurrection is appointed here.

Let it be blotted out on earth: in Heaven 50

There shall be written with it penitence, And grace, and saving faith, and such good deeds

Wrought in atonement, as my soul this day

Hath sworn to offer up.

hearths

Then be thy name, She answer'd, Maccabee, from this day forth:

For this day art thou born again; and like

Those brethren of old times, whose holy names

Live in the memory of all noble hearts For love and admiration, ever young,... So for our native country, for her

60

And altars, for her cradles and her graves,

Hast thou thyself devoted. Let us now Each to our work. Among the neighbouring hills,

I to the vassals of my father's house; Thou to Visonia. Tell the Abbot there What thou hast seen at Auria; and with him

Take counsel who of all our Baronage
Is worthiest to lead on the sons of Spain,
And wear upon his brow the Spanish
crown.

Now, brother, fare thee well! we part in hope, 70

And we shall meet again, be sure, in joy.

So saying, Adosinda left the King
Alone amid the ruins. There he stood,
As when Elisha, on the farther bank
Of Jordan, saw that elder prophet mount
The fiery chariot, and the steeds of fire,
Trampling the whirlwind, bear him up
the sky:

Thus gazing after her did Roderick stand;

And as the immortal Tishbite left behind

His mantle and prophetic power, even 80

Had her inspiring presence left infused The spirit which she breathed. Gazing he stood.

As at a heavenly visitation there

Vouchsafed in mercy to himself and Spain;

And when the heroic mourner from his sight

Had pass'd away, still reverential awe Held him suspended there and motionless.

Then turning from the ghastly scene of death

Up murmuring Lona, he began toward The holy Bierzo his obedient way. Sil's ample stream he crost, where through the vale

Of Orras, from that sacred land it bears The whole collected waters; northward then,

Skirting the heights of Aguiar, he reach'd

That consecrated pile amid the wild, Which sainted Fructuoso in his zeal Rear'd to St. Felix, on Visonia's banks.

In commune with a priest of age mature,

Whose thoughtful visage and majestic mien

Bespake authority and weight of care, Odoar, the venerable Abbot, sate, 101 When ushering Roderick in, the Porter said,

A stranger came from Auria, and required

His private ear. From Auria? said the old man,

Comest thou from Auria, brother? I can spare

Thy painful errand then, . . we know the worst.

Nay, answer'd Roderick, but thou hast not heard

My tale. Where that devoted city lies In ashes, 'mid the ruins and the dead

I found a woman, whom the Moors had borne

Captive away; but she, by Heaven inspired

And her good heart, with her own arm had wrought

Her own deliverance, smiting in his tent A lustful Moorish miscreant, as of yore By Judith's holy deed the Assyrian fell. And that same spirit which had strengthen'd her

Work'd in her still. Four walls with patient toil

She rear'd, wherein, as in a sepulchre, With her own hands she laid her murder'd babe,

Her husband and her parents, side by side;

And when we cover'd in this shapeless tomb.

There on the grave of all her family, Did this courageous mourner dedicate All thoughts and actions of her future life

To her poor country. For she said, that Heaven

Supporting her, in mercy had vouchsafed

A foretaste of revenge; that, like the grace

Of God, revenge had saved her; that in it Spain must have her salvation; and henceforth

That passion, thus sublimed and sanctified, 130

Must be to all the loyal sons of Spain The pole-star of their faith, their rule and rite,

Observances and worthiest sacrifice. I took the vow, unworthy as I am,

Her first sworn follower in the appointed rule;

And then we parted; she among the hills To rouse the vassals of her father's house:

I at her bidding hitherward, to ask
Thy counsel, who of our old Baronage
Shall place upon his brow the Spanish
crown. 140

The Lady Adosinda? Odoar cried. Roderick made answer, So she call'd herself.

Oh, none but she! exclaim'd the good old man,

Clasping his hands, which trembled as he spake

In act of pious passion raised to Heaven, . .

Oh, none but Adosinda! . . none but she, . .

None but that noble heart, which was the heart

Of Auria while it stood, its life and strength,

More than her father's presence, or the arm

Of her brave husband, valiant as he was. Hers was the spirit which inspired old age, 151

Ambitious boyhood, girls in timid youth, And virgins in the beauty of their spring, And youthful mothers, doting like herself

With ever-anxious love: She breathed through all

That zeal and that devoted faithfulness, Which to the invader's threats and promises

Turn'd a deaf ear alike; which in the head

And flood of prosperous fortune check'd his course,

Repell'd him from the walls, and when at length 160

His overpowering numbers forced their way,

Even in that uttermost extremity

Unyielding, still from street to street, from house

To house, from floor to floor, maintain'd the fight:

Till by their altars falling, in their doors, And on their household hearths, and by their beds

And cradles, and their fathers' sepulchres,

This noble army, gloriously revenged,

Embraced their martyrdom. Heroic souls!

Well have ye done, and righteously discharged 170

Your arduous part! Your service is perform'd,

Your earthly warfare done! Ye have put on

The purple robe of everlasting peace!
Ye have received your crown! Ye bear
the palm

Before the throne of Grace!

With that he paused, Checking the strong emotions of his soul. Then with a solemn tone addressing him

Who shared his secret thoughts, thou knowest, he said,

O Urban, that they have not fallen in vain;

For by this virtuous sacrifice they thinn'd 180

Alcahman's thousands; and his broken force,

Exhausted by their dear-bought victory, Turn'd back from Auria, leaving us to breathe

Among our mountains yet. We lack not here

Good hearts, nor valiant hands. What walls or towers

Or battlements are like these fastnesses, These rocks and glens and everlasting hills?

Give but that Aurian spirit, and the Moors

Will spend their force as idly on these holds,

As round the rocky girdle of the land 190 The wild Cantabrian billows waste their rage.

Give but that spirit! . . Heaven hath given it us,

If Adosinda thus, as from the dead, Be granted to our prayers!

And who art thou, Said Urban, who hast taken on thyself This rule of warlike faith? Thy countenance And those poor weeds bespeak a life ere this

Devoted to austere observances.

Roderick replied, I am a sinful man, One who in solitude hath long deplored A life mis-spent; but never bound by vows,

Till Adosinda taught me where to find Comfort, and how to work forgiveness out.

When that exalted woman took my vow, She call'd me Maccabee; from this day forth

Be that my earthly name. But tell me now,

Whom shall we rouse to take upon his head

The crown of Spain? Where are the Gothic Chiefs?

Sacaru, Theudemir, Athanagild,

All who survived that eight days' obstinate fight,

When clogg'd with bodies Chrysus scarce could force

Its bloody stream along? Witiza's sons, Bad offspring of a stock accurst, I know, Have put the turban on their recreant heads.

Where are your own Cantabrian Lords?
I ween,

Eudon, and Pedro, and Pelayo now Have ceased their rivalry. If Pelayo live,

His were the worthy heart and rightful hand

To wield the sceptre and the sword of Spain.

Odoar and Urban eyed him while he spake, 220

As if they wonder'd whose the tongue might be

Familiar thus with Chiefs and thoughts of state.

a trace

Betray'd the Royal Goth: sunk was that eve

Of sovereignty, and on the emaciate

Had penitence and anguish deeply drawn

Their furrows premature, . . forestalling

And shedding upon thirty's brow more

Than threescore winters in their natural course

Might else have sprinkled there. It seems indeed 230

That thou hast pass'd thy days in solitude.

Replied the Abbot, or thou would'st not

Of things so long gone by. Athanagild And Theudemir have taken on their necks

The yoke. Sacaru play'd a nobler part. Long within Merida did he withstand The invader's hot assault: and when

at length,

Hopeless of all relief, he yielded up The gates, disdaining in his father's land To breathe the air of bondage, with a few 240

Found faithful till the last, indignantly Did he toward the ocean bend his way. And shaking from his feet the dust of Spain,

Took ship, and hoisted sail through seas unknown

To seek for freedom. Our Cantabrian

All have submitted, but the wary Moor Trusteth not all alike: At his own Court He holds Pelayo, as suspecting most

That calm and manly spirit; Pedro's

There too is held as hostage, and secures !

They scann'd his countenance, but not His father's faith; Count Eudon is despised.

> And so lives unmolested. When he pays

His tribute, an uncomfortable thought May then perhaps disturb him: . . or more like

He meditates how profitable 'twere

To be a Moor; and if apostacy

Were all, and to be unbaptized might serve, . .

But I waste breath upon a wretch like this:

Pelayo is the only hope of Spain,

Only Pelayo.

If, as we believe, 260 Said Urban then, the hand of Heaven is

And dreadful though they be, yet for wise end

Of good, these visitations do its work; And dimly as our mortal sight may scan The future, yet methinks my soul descries

How in Pelayo should the purposes

Of Heaven be best accomplished. All too long.

Here in their own inheritance, the sons Of Spain have groan'd beneath a foreign yoke.

Punic and Roman, Kelt, and Goth, and Greek:

This latter tempest comes to sweep away

All proud distinctions which commingling blood

And time's long course have fail'd to efface: and now

Perchance it is the will of Fate to rear Upon the soil of Spain a Spanish throne, Restoring in Pelayo's native line The sceptre to the Spaniard.

Go thou, then, And seek Pelayo at the Conqueror's court.

Tell him the mountaineers are unsubdued:

The precious time they needed hath been gain'd 280

By Auria's sacrifice, and all they ask Is him to guide them on. In Odoar's

And Urban's, tell him that the hour is come.

Then pausing for a moment, he pursued,

The rule which thou hast taken on thyself

Toledo ratifies: 'tis meet for Spain,

And as the will divine, to be received,

Observed, and spread abroad. Come hither thou,

Who for thyself hast chosen the good part:

Let me lay hands on thee, and consecrate 290

Thy life unto the Lord.

Me Lord

Me! Roderick cried;
Me! sinner that I am!.. and while he
spake

His wither'd cheek grew paler, and his

Shook. As thou goest among the infidels.

Pursued the Primate, many thou wilt

Fallen from the faith; by weakness some betray'd,

Some led astray by baser hope of gain, And haply too by ill example led

Of those in whom they trusted. Yet have these

Their lonely hours, when sorrow, or the touch

Of sickness, and that aweful power divine

Which hath its dwelling in the heart of man.

Life of his soul, his monitor and judge,

Move them with silent impulse; but they look

For help, and finding none to succour them,

The irrevocable moment passeth by.

Therefore, my brother, in the name of Christ

Thus I lay hands on thee, that in His

Thou with His gracious promises may'st raise

The fallen, and comfort those that are in need, 310

And bring salvation to the penitent.

Now, brother, go thy way: the peace of God

Be with thee, and his blessing prosper us!

V. RODERICK AND SIVERIAN

BETWEEN St. Felix and the regal seat Of Abdalazis, ancient Cordoba,

Lay many a long day's journey interposed;

And many a mountain range hath Roderick crost,

And many a lovely vale, ere he beheld Where Betis, winding through the unbounded plain,

Roll'd his majestic waters. There at eve, Entering an inn, he took his humble seat With other travellers round the crackling hearth,

Where heath and cistus gave their flagrant flame.

That flame no longer, as in other times, Lit up the countenance of easy mirth

And light discourse: the talk which now went round

Was of the grief that press'd on every heart;

Of Spain subdued; the sceptre of the Goths

Broken; their nation and their name effaced;

Slaughter and mourning, which had left no house

Unvisited; and shame, which set its mark

On every Spaniard's face. One who had seen

His sons fall bravely at his side, bewail'd 20

The unhappy chance which, rescuing him from death,

Left him the last of all his family;

Yet he rejoiced to think that none who drew

Their blood from him remain'd to wear the yoke,

Be at the miscreant's beck, and propagate

A breed of slaves to serve them. Here sate one

Who told of fair possessions lost, and babes

To goodly fortunes born, of all bereft.

Another for a virgin daughter mourn'd,
The land barbaria's and A fourth

The lewd barbarian's spoil. A fourth had seen 30

His only child forsake him in his age, And for a Moor renounce her hope in Christ.

His was the heaviest grief of all, he said; And clenching as he spake his hoary locks,

He cursed King Roderick's soul.

Oh curse him not!

Roderick exclaim'd, all shuddering as he spake.

Oh, for the love of Jesus, curse him not! Sufficient is the dreadful load of guilt That lies upon his miserable soul! O brother, do not curse that sinful soul,

Which Jesus suffer'd on the cross to

But then an old man, who had sate thus long

A silent listener, from his seat arose,

And moving round to Roderick took his hand;

Christ bless thee, brother, for that Christian speech,

He said; and shame on me that any tongue

Readier than mine was found to utter it!

His own emotion fill'd him while he
spake,

So that he did not feel how Roderick's hand

Shook like a palsied limb; and none could see 50

How, at his well-known voice, the countenance

Of that poor traveller suddenly was changed,

And sunk with deadlier paleness; for the flame

Was spent, and from behind him, on the

High hung, the lamp with feeble glimmering play'd.

Oh it is ever thus! the old man pursued,

The crimes and woes of universal Spain Are charged on him; and curses which should aim

At living heads, pursue beyond the grave
His poor unhappy soul! As if his sin 60
Had wrought the fall of our old
monarchy!

As if the Musselmen in their career

Would ne'er have overleapt the gulph which parts

Iberia from the Mauritanian shore,

If Julian had not beckon'd them!.. Alas!

The evils which drew on our overthrow, Would soon by other means have wrought their end,

Though Julian's daughter should have lived and died

A virgin vow'd and veil'd.

Touch not on that, Shrinking with inward shiverings at the thought.

The penitent exclaim'd. Oh, if thou lovest

The soul of Roderick, touch not on that deed!

God in his mercy may forgive it him, But human tongue must never speak his name

Without reproach and utter infamy,
For that abhorred act. Even thou . .
But here

Siverian taking up the word, brake off Unwittingly the incautious speech. Even I.

Quoth he, who nursed him in his father's hall, . .

Even I can only for that deed of shame Offer in agony my secret prayers. 81 But Spain hath witness'd other crimes as foul:

Have we not seen Favila's shameless wife,

Throned in Witiza's ivory car, parade Our towns with regal pageantry, and bid The murderous tyrant in her husband's blood

Dip his adulterous hand? Did we not see

Pelayo, by that bloody king's pursuit, And that unnatural mother, from the land

With open outcry, like an outlaw'd thief, 90

Hunted? And saw ye not, Theodofred, As through the streets I guided his dark steps,

Roll mournfully toward the noon-day sun

His blank and senseless eye-balls? Spain saw this,

And suffer'd it!.. I seek not to excuse The sin of Roderick. Jesu, who beholds The burning tears I shed in solitude,

Knows how I plead for him in midnight prayer.

But if, when he victoriously revenged
The wrongs of Chindasuintho's house,
his sword 100

Had not for mercy turn'd aside its edge, Oh what a day of glory had there been Upon the banks of Chrysus! Curse not him,

Who in that fatal conflict to the last So valiantly maintain'd his country's cause;

But if your sorrow needs must have its vent

In curses, let your imprecations strike The caitiffs, who, when Roderick's horned helm

Rose eminent amid the thickest fight, Betraying him who spared and trusted them,

Forsook their King, their Country, and their God,

And gave the Moor his conquest.

Ay! they said,

These were Witiza's hateful progeny; And in an evil hour the unhappy King Had spared the viperous brood. With that they talk'd

How Sisibert and Ebba through the land Guided the foe: and Orpas, who had cast

The mitre from his renegado brow,

Went with the armies of the infidels;

And how in Hispalis, even where his hands 120

Had minister'd so oft the bread of life, The circumcised apostate did not shame To shew in open day his turban'd head. The Queen too, Egilona, one exclaim'd; Was she not married to the enemy,

The Moor, the Misbeliever? What a heart

Were hers, that she could pride and plumo herself

To rank among his herd of concubines,

Having been what she had been! And The peace of Heaven, . . she then was who could say

How far domestic wrongs and discontent

Had wrought upon the King!.. Hereat the old man,

Raising beneath the knit and curly brow His mournful eyes, replied, This I can

That that unquiet spirit and unblest, Though Roderick never told his sorrows, drove

Rusilla from the palace of her son.

She could not bear to see his generous

Wither beneath the unwholesome influence.

And cankering at the core. And I know

That oft when she deplored his barren bed. 140

The thought of Egilona's qualities

Came like a bitter medicine for her grief, And to the extinction of her husband's line.

Sad consolation, reconciled her heart.

But Roderick, while they communed thus, had ceased

To hear, such painfulest anxiety

The sight of that old venerable man Awoke. A sickening fear came over him:

The hope which led him from his hermitage

Now seem'd for ever gone, for well he 150

Nothing but death could break the ties which bound

That faithful servant to his father's house.

She then for whose forgiveness he had yearn'd.

Who in her blessing would have given and found

to the grave

Gone down disconsolate at last; in this Of all the woes of her unhappy life

Unhappiest, that she did not live to see God had vouchsafed repentance to her child.

But then a hope arose that yet she lived; The weighty cause which led Siverian here

Might draw him from her side; better to know

The worst than fear it. And with that he bent

Over the embers, and with head half raised

Aslant, and shadow'd by his hand, he said.

Where is King Roderick's mother? lives she still?

God hath upheld her, the old man replied;

She bears this last and heaviest of her griefs.

Not as she bore her husband's wrongs, when hope

And her indignant heart supported her; But patiently, like one who finds from Heaven 171

A comfort which the world can neither give

Nor take away. . . Roderick inquired no more:

He breathed a silent prayer in gratitude, Then wrapt his cloak around him, and lay down

Where he might weep unseen.

When morning came.

Earliest of all the travellers he went forth.

And linger'd for Siverian by the way, Beside a fountain, where the constant

Of water its perpetual gurgling made,

To the wayfaring or the musing man Sweetest of all sweet sounds. Christian hand.

Whose general charity for man and

Built it in better times, had with a cross Of well-hewn stone crested the pious work.

Which now the misbelievers had cast down.

And broken in the dust it lay defiled. Roderick beheld it lying at his feet,

And gathering reverently the fragments

Placed them within the cistern, and restored

With careful collocation its dear form, . . So might the waters, like a crystal

Preserve it from pollution. Kneeling then.

O'er the memorial of redeeming love He bent, and mingled with the fount his tears.

And pour'd his spirit to the Crucified.

A Moor came by, and seeing him, exclaim'd.

Ah, Kaffer! worshipper of wood and stone.

God's curse confound thee! And as Roderick turn'd

His face, the miscreant spurn'd him with his foot

Between the eyes. The indignant King arose.

And fell'd him to the ground. But then the Moor

Drew forth his dagger, rising as he cried, What, darëst thou, thou infidel and slave, Strike a believer? and he aim'd a blow At Roderick's breast. But Roderick In evil days like ours? What thou hast

caught his arm, And closed, and wrench'd the dagger from his hold, . .

Such timely strength did those emaciate limbs

From indignation draw, . . and in his neck

With mortal stroke he drove the avenging steel

Hilt deep. Then, as the thirsty sand drank in

The expiring miscreant's blood, he look'd around

In sudden apprehension, lest the Moors Had seen them: but Siverian was in sight.

The only traveller, and he smote his

And hasten'd up. Ah, brother! said the old man,

Thine is a spirit of the ancient mould! And would to God a thousand men like thee

Had fought at Roderick's side on that last day

When treason overpower'd him! Now. alas!

A manly Gothic heart doth ill accord With these unhappy times. Come, let us hide

This carrion, while the favouring hour permits.

So saying he alighted. Soon they scoop'd

Amid loose-lying sand a hasty grave, And levell'd over it the easy soil.

Father, said Roderick, as they journey'd

Let this thing be a seal and sacrament Of truth between us: Wherefore should there be

Concealment between two right Gothic

seen

Is but the first fruit of the sacrifice, Which on this injured and polluted soil, As on a bloody altar, I have sworn
To offer to insulted Heaven for Spain,
Her vengeance and her expiation. This
Was but a hasty act, by sudden wrong
Provoked: but I am bound for Cordoba,
On weighty mission from Visonia sent,
To breathe into Pelayo's ear a voice 240
Of spirit-stirring power, which, like the
trump

Of the Arch-angel, shall awake dead Spain.

The northern mountaineers are unsubdued:

They call upon Pelayo for their chief; Odoar and Urban tell him that the hour Is come. Thou too, I ween, old man, art charged

With no light errand, or thou wouldst not now

Have left the ruins of thy master's house.

Who art thou? cried Siverian, as he search'd

The wan and wither'd features of the King. 250

The face is of a stranger, but thy voice Disturbs me like a dream.

Roderick replied,

Thou seest me as I am, . . a stranger;

Whose fortunes in the general wreck were lost,

His name and lineage utterly extinct,
Himself in mercy spared, surviving all;...
In mercy, that the bitter cup might heal
A soul diseased. Now, having cast the
slough

Of old offences, thou beholdest me
A man new born; in second baptism
named,
260

Like those who in Judea bravely raised Against the Heathen's impious tyranny The banner of Jehovah, Maccabee; So call me. In that name hath Urban laid His consecrating hands upon my head; And in that name have I myself for Spain Devoted. Tell me now why thou art sent

To Cordoba; for sure thou goëst not An idle gazer to the Conqueror's court.

Thou judgest well, the old man replied.
I too 270

Seek the Cantabrian Prince, the hope of Spain,

With other tidings charged, for other end

Design'd, yet such as well may work with thine.

My noble Mistress sends me to avert The shame that threats his house. The renegade

Numacian, he who for the infidels Oppresses Gegio, insolently woos His sister. Moulded in a wicked womb,

The unworthy Guisla hath inherited
Her Mother's leprous taint; and willingly 280

She to the circumcised and upstart slave.

Disdaining all admonishment, gives ear. The Lady Gaudiosa sees in this,

With the quick foresight of maternal

The impending danger to her husband's house,

Knowing his generous spirit ne'er will

The base alliance. Guisla lewdly sets His will at nought; but that vile renegade,

From hatred, and from avarice, and from fear, 289

Will seek the extinction of Pelayo's line. This too my venerable Mistress sees;

Wherefore these valiant and highminded dames

Send me to Cordoba; that if the Prince Cannot by timely interdiction stop The irrevocable act of infamy,

He may at least to his own safety look, Being timely warn'd.

Thy Mistress sojourns then With Gaudiosa, in Pelayo's hall?

Said Roderick. 'Tis her natural home, rejoin'd

Siverian: Chindasuintho's royal race
Have ever shared one lot of weal or woe:
And she who hath beheld her own fair
shoot,

The goodly summit of that ancient tree, Struck by Heaven's bolt, seeks shelter now beneath

The only branch of its majestic stem That still survives the storm.

Thus they pursued

Their journey, each from other gathering

For thought, with many a silent interval Of mournful meditation, till they saw The temples and the towers of Cordoba Shining majestic in the light of eve. 310 Before them Betis roll'd his glittering stream,

In many a silvery winding traced afar Amid the ample plain. Behind the walls

And stately piles which crown'd its margin, rich

With olives, and with sunny slope of vines,

And many a lovely hamlet interspersed, Whose citron bowers were once the abode of peace,

Height above height, receding hills were seen

Imbued with evening hues; and over all The summits of the dark sierra rose, 320 Lifting their heads amid the silent sky. The traveller who with a heart at ease Had seen the goodly vision, would have loved

To linger, seeking with insatiate sight

A joy for years to come. O Cordoba, Exclaim'd the old man, how princely are thy towers,

How fair thy vales, thy hills how beautiful!

The sun who sheds on thee his parting smiles 329

Sees not in all his wide career a scene Lovelier, nor more exuberantly blest

By bounteous earth and heaven. The very gales

Of Eden waft not from the immortal bowers

Odours to sense more exquisite, than these

Which, breathing from thy groves and gardens, now

Recall in me such thoughts of bitterness.

The time has been when happy was
their lot

Who had their birthright here; but happy now

Are they who to thy bosom are gone home,

Because they feel not in their graves the feet 340

That trample upon Spain. 'Tis well that age

Hath made me like a child, that I can weep:

My heart would else have broken, overcharged,

And I, false servant, should lie down to rest

Before my work is done.

Hard by their path,
A little way without the walls, there
stood

An edifice, whereto, as by a spell, Siverian's heart was drawn. Brother, quoth he,

'Tis like the urgency of our return

Will brook of no retardment; and this spot 350

To treasure up its image, deep impress'd, It were a sin if I should pass, and leave

Unvisited. Beseech you turn with me, The while I offer up one duteous prayer.

Roderick made no reply. He had not dared

To turn his face toward those walls; but now

He follow'd where the old man led the way.

Lord! in his heart the silent sufferer said,

Forgive my feeble soul, which would have shrunk

From this, . . for what am I that I should put 359

The bitter cup aside! O let my shame And anguish be accepted in thy sight!

VI. RODERICK IN TIMES PAST

THE mansion whitherward they went, was one

Which in his youth Theodofred had built:

Thither had he brought home in happy

His blooming bride; there fondled on his knee

The lovely boy she bore him. Close beside,

A temple to that Saint he rear'd, who first,

As old tradition tells, proclaim'd to Spain

The gospel-tidings; and in health and youth,

There mindful of mortality, he saw
His sepulchre prepared. Witiza took 10
For his adulterous leman and himself
The stately pile: but to that sepulchre,
When from captivity and darkness
death

Enlarged him, was Theodofred consign'd;

For that unhappy woman, wasting then Beneath a mortal malady, at heart Was smitten, and the Tyrant at her prayer

This poor and tardy restitution made. Soon the repentant sinner follow'd him; And calling on Pelayo ere she died, 20 For his own wrongs, and for his father's

death,
Implored forgiveness of her absent
child...

If it were possible he could forgive Crimes black as hers, she said. And by the pangs

Of her remorse, . . by her last agonies, . . The unutterable horrors of her death, . . And by the blood of Jesus on the cross For sinners given, did she beseech his prayers

In aid of her most miserable soul.

Thus mingling sudden shrieks with hopeless vows, 30

And uttering franticly Pelayo's name, And crying out for mercy in despair, Here had she made her dreadful end

Here had she made her dreadful end, and here

Her wretched body was deposited.

That presence seem'd to desecrate the place:

Thenceforth the usurper shunn'd it with the heart

Of conscious guilt; nor could Rusilla bear These groves and bowers, which, like funereal shades,

Oppress'd her with their monumental forms:

One day of bitter and severe delight, 40 When Roderick came for vengeance, she endured,

And then for ever left her bridal halls.

Oh when I last beheld you princely pile,

Exclaim'd Siverian, with what other thoughts

Full, and elate of spirit, did I pass Its joyous gates! The weedery which

through

The interstices of those neglected courts Uncheck'd had flourish'd long, and seeded there.

Was trampled then and bruised beneath the feet

Of thronging crowds. Here drawn in fair array,

The faithful vassals of my master's

Their javelins sparkling to the morning

Spread their triumphant banners; highplumed helms

Rose o'er the martial ranks, and prancing steeds

Made answer to the trumpet's stirring voice :

While yonder towers shook the dull silence off

Which long to their deserted walls had clung,

And with redoubling echoes swell'd the

That hail'd victorious Roderick. Louder

The acclamation, when the dust was

Rising beneath his chariot-wheels far off; But nearer as the youthful hero came, All sounds of all the multitude were hush'd.

And from the thousands and ten thousands here.

Cordoba and Hispalis sent Whom forth...

Yea whom all Baetica, all Spain pour'd

To greet his triumph, . . not a whisper

To Heaven, such awe and reverence master'd them.

Conqueror and King he came: but with no joy

Of conquest, and no pride of sovereignty That day display'd; for at his father's grave

Did Roderick come to offer up his vow Of vengeance well perform'd. Three coal-black steeds

Drew on his ivory chariot: by his side. Still wrapt in mourning for the longdeceased.

Rusilla sate; a deeper paleness blanch'd Her faded countenance, but in her eve The light of her majestic nature shone.

Bound, and expecting at their hands the death

So well deserved, Witiza follow'd them: Aghast and trembling, first he gazed around,

Wildly from side to side; then from the face

Of universal execration shrunk,

Hanging his wretched head abased; and poor

Of spirit, with unmanly tears deplored His fortune, not his crimes. With bolder front.

Confiding in his priestly character,

Came Orpas next; and then the spurious race

Whom in unhappy hour Favila's wife 90 Brought forth for Spain. O mercy ill bestow'd.

When Roderick, in compassion for their youth,

And for Pelayo's sake, forbore to crush The brood of vipers!

Err perchance he might, Replied the Goth, suppressing as he spake

All outward signs of pain, though every word

Went like a dagger to his bleeding heart:..

Such expectation held them motionless. But sure, I ween, that error is not placed

Among his sins. Old man, thou mayest regret

The mercy ill deserved, and worse return'd, . roo

But not for this wouldst thou reproach the King!

Reproach him! cried Siverian; . . I reproach

My child, . . my noble boy, . . whom every tongue

Bless'd at that hour, . . whose love fill'd every heart

With joy, and every eye with joyful tears!

My brave, my beautiful, my generous boy!

Brave, beautiful, and generous as he was, Never so brave, so beautiful, so great As then,..not even on that glorious day, When on the field of victory, elevate no Amid the thousands who acclaim'd him King,

Firm on the shield above their heads upraised,

Erect he stood, and waved his bloody sword. . .

Why dost thou shake thy head as if in doubt?

I do not dream, nor fable! Ten short years

Have scarcely pass'd away, since all within

The Pyrenean hills, and the three seas Which girdle Spain, echoed in one response

The acclamation from that field of fight...

Or doth aught ail thee, that thy body quakes 120

And shudders thus?

'Tis but a chill, replied
The King, in passing from the open air
Under the shadow of this thick-set
grove.

Oh! if this scene awoke in thee such thoughts

As swell my bosom here, the old man pursued,

Sunshine, or shade, and all things from without,

Would be alike indifferent. Gracious God,

Only but ten short years, . . and all so changed!

Ten little years since in yon court he check'd

His fiery steeds. The steeds obey'd his hand, 130

The whirling wheels stood still, and when he leapt

Upon the pavement, the whole people heard,

In their deep silence, open-ear'd, the sound.

With slower movement from the ivory seat

Rusilla rose, her arm, as down she stept, Extended to her son's supporting hand; Not for default of firm or agile strength, But that the feeling of that solemn hour Subdued her then, and tears bedimm'd her sight.

Howbeit when to her husband's grave she came, 140

On the sepulchral stone she bow'd her head

Awhile; then rose collectedly, and fix'd Upon the scene her calm and steady eye. Roderick, . . oh when did valour wear a form

So beautiful, so noble, so august?

Or vengeance, when did it put on before A character so aweful, so divine?

Roderick stood up, and reaching to the tomb

His hands, my hero cried, Theodofred!
Father! I stand before thee once again,
According to thy prayer, when kneeling
down
151

Between thy knees I took my last farewell:

And vow'd by all thy sufferings, all thy wrongs,

And by my mother's days and nights of woe.

Her silent anguish, and the grief which then

Even from thee she did not seek to hide, That if our cruel parting should avail To save me from the Tyrant's jealous

guilt,

Surely should my avenging sword fulfil Whate'er he omen'd. Oh that time, I cried,

Would give the strength of manhood to this arm,

Already would it find a manly heart
To guide it to its purpose! And I swore
Never again to see my father's face,
Nor ask my mother's blessing, till I
brought,

Dead or in chains, the Tyrant to thy feet. Boy as I was, before all Saints in Heaven,

And highest God, whose justice slumbereth not,

I made the vow. According to thy prayer,

In all things, O my father, is that vow Perform'd, alas too well! for thou didst pray,

While looking up I felt the burning tears Which from thy sightless sockets stream'd, drop down, . .

That to thy grave, and not thy living feet,

The oppressor might be led. Behold him there, . .

Father! Theodofred! no longer now In darkness, from thy heavenly seat look down.

And see before thy grave thine enemy In bonds, awaiting judgement at my hand! Thus while the hero spake, Witiza stood 180

Listening in agony, with open mouth,

And head half-raised, toward his sentence turn'd:

His eye-lids stiffen'd and pursed up, . . his eyes

Rigid, and wild, and wide; and when the King

Had ceased, amid the silence which ensued,

The dastard's chains were heard, link against link

Clinking. At length upon his knees he fell,

And lifting up his trembling hands, outstretch'd

In supplication, . . Mercy! he exclaim'd. . .

Chains, dungeons, darkness, . . any thing but death! . . 190

I did not touch his life.

Roderick replied, His hour, whenever it had come, had found

A soul prepared: he lived in peace with Heaven.

And life prolong'd for him, was bliss delay'd.

But life, in pain and darkness and despair,

For thee, all leprous as thou art with crimes,

Is mercy... Take him hence, and let him see

The light of day no more!

Such Roderick was

When last I saw these courts, . . his theatre

Of glory;..such when last I visited 200
My master's grave! Ten years have
hardly held

Their course, . . ten little years . . break, break, old heart . .

Oh, why art thou so tough!

As thus he spake

They reach'd the church. The door before his hand

Gave way; both blinded with their tears, they went

Straight to the tomb; and there Siverian knelt,

And bow'd his face upon the sepulchre, Weeping aloud; while Roderick, overpower'd,

And calling upon earth to cover him,

Threw himself prostrate on his father's
grave.

210

Thus as they lay, an aweful voice in tones

Severe address'd them. Who are ye, it said,

That with your passion thus, and on this night,

Disturb my prayers? Starting they rose; there stood

A man before them of majestic form And stature, clad in sackcloth, bare of foot,

Pale, and in tears, with ashes on his head.

VII. RODERICK AND PELAYO

'Twas not in vain that on her absent son,

Pelayo's mother from the bed of death Call'd for forgiveness, and in agony

Besought his prayers; all guilty as she was,

Sure he had not been human, if that cry Had fail'd to pierce him. When he heard the tale

He bless'd the messenger, even while his speech

Was faltering, . . while from head to foot he shook

With icy feelings from his inmost heart | Stood up in sackcloth.

Effused. It changed the nature of his woe,

Making the burthen more endurable:
The life-long sorrow that remain'd,
became

A healing and a chastening grief, and brought

His soul, in close communion, nearer Heaven.

For he had been her first-born, and the love

Which at her breast he drew, and from her smiles,

And from her voice of tenderness imbibed,

Gave such unnatural horror to her crimes,

That when the thought came over him, it seem'd

As if the milk which with his infant life Had blended, thrill'd like poison through his frame.

It was a woe beyond all reach of hope, Till with the dreadful tale of her remorse Faith touch'd his heart; and ever from that day

Did he for her who bore him, night and morn.

Pour out the anguish of his soul in prayer:

But chiefly as the night return'd, which heard

Her last expiring groans of penitence,

Then through the long and painful hours, before

The altar, like a penitent himself, 30 He kept his vigils; and when Roderick's sword

Subdued Witiza, and the land was free, Duly upon her grave he offer'd up

His yearly sacrifice of agony

And prayer. This was the night, and he it was

Who now before Siverian and the King Stood up in sackcloth.

The old man, from fear

Recovering and from wonder, knew him first.

It is the Prince! he cried, and bending down

Embraced his knees. The action and the word 40

Awaken'd Roderick; he shook off the load

Of struggling thoughts, which pressing on his heart,

Held him like one entranced; yet, all untaught

To bend before the face of man, confused Awhile he stood, forgetful of his part. But when Siverian cried, My Lord, my Lord.

Now God be praised that I have found thee thus,

My Lord and Prince, Spain's only hope and mine!

Then Roderick, echoing him, exclaim'd, My Lord

And Prince, Pelayo!.. and approaching near, 50

He bent his knee obeisant: but his head Earthward inclined; while the old man, looking up

From his low gesture to Pelayo's face, Wept at beholding him for grief and joy.

Siverian! cried the chief, . . of whom hath Death

Bereaved me, that thou comest to Cordoba?..

Children, or wife?.. Or hath the merciless scythe

Of this abhorr'd and jealous tyranny Made my house desolate at one wide sweep?

They are as thou couldst wish, the old man replied, 60

Wert thou but lord of thine own house again,

And Spain were Spain once more. A tale of ill

I bear, but one that touches not the heart

Like what thy fears forbode. The renegade

Numacian woos thy sister, and she lends To the vile slave, unworthily, her ear: The Lady Gaudiosa hath in vain

Warn'd her of all the evils which await A union thus accurst: she sets at nought

Her faith, her lineage, and thy certain wrath. 70

Pelayo hearing him, remain'd awhile Silent; then turning to his mother's grave, . .

O thou poor dust, hath then the infectious taint

Survived thy dread remorse, that it should run

In Guisla's veins? he cried; .. I should have heard

This shameful sorrow any where but here!..

Humble thyself, proud heart; thou, gracious Heaven,

Be merciful!..it is the original flaw,...
And what are we?..a weak unhappy
race,

Born to our sad inheritance of sin 80 And death!.. He smote his forehead as he spake,

And from his head the ashes fell, like snow

Shaken from some dry beech-leaves, when a bird

Lights on the bending spray. A little while

In silence, rather than in thought, he stood

Passive beneath the sorrow: turning then,

And what doth Gaudiosa counsel me?

ever been

My wise and faithful counsellor. . . He replied.

The Lady Gaudiosa bade me say She sees the danger which on every part Besets her husband's house . . Here she had ceased:

But when my noble Mistress gave in charge,

How I should tell thee that in evil times The bravest counsels ever are the best: Then that high-minded Lady thus rejoin'd,

Whatever be my Lord's resolve, he knows

I bear a mind prepared.

Brave spirits! cried Pelayo, worthy to remove all stain Of weakness from their sex! I should be less 100

Than man, if, drawing strength where others find

Their hearts most open to assault of fear, I quail'd at danger. Never be it said Of Spain, that in the hour of her distress Her women were as heroes, but her men Perform'd the woman's part.

Roderick at that

Look'd up, and taking up the word, exclaim'd.

O Prince, in better days the pride of Spain,

And prostrate as she lies, her surest hope.

Hear now my tale. The fire which seem'd extinct

Hath risen revigorate: a living spark From Auria's ashes, by a woman's hand Preserved and quicken'd, kindles far and wide

The beacon-flame o'er all the Asturian hills.

There hath a vow been offer'd up, which binds

He ask'd the old man; for she hath Us and our children's children to the work

> Of holy hatred. In the name of Spain That vow hath been pronounced and register'd

> Above, to be the bond whereby we stand

> For condemnation acceptance. Heaven

> Received the irrevocable vow, and Earth Must witness its fulfilment, Earth and Heaven

Call upon thee, Pelayo! Upon thee The spirits of thy royal ancestors

Look down expectant; unto thee, from fields

Laid waste, and hamlets burnt, and cities sack'd,

The blood of infancy and helpless age Cries out; thy native mountains call for thee.

Echoing from all their armed sons thy name.

And deem not thou that hot impatience goads

Thy countrymen to counsels immature. Odoar and Urban from Visonia's banks Send me, their sworn and trusted messenger,

To summon thee, and tell thee in their name

That now the hour is come: For sure it seems.

Thus saith the Primate, Heaven's high will to rear

Upon the soil of Spain a Spanish throne, Restoring in thy native line, O Prince, The sceptre to the Spaniard. Worthy

son Of that most ancient and heroic race, 140 Which with unweariable endurance still Hath striven against its mightier

enemies. Roman or Carthaginian, Greek or Goth; So often by superior arms oppress'd,

More often by superior arts beguiled;
Yet amid all its sufferings, all the waste
Of sword and fire remorselessly employ'd,
Unconquer'd and unconquerable still;...
Son of that injured and illustrious stock,
Stand forward thou, draw forth the
sword of Spain,

Restore them to their rights, too long withheld,

And place upon thy brow the Spanish crown.

When Roderick ceased, the princely Mountaineer

Gazed on the passionate orator awhile, With eyes intently fix'd, and thoughtful brow:

Then turning to the altar, he let fall
The sackcloth robe, which late with
folded arms

Against his heart was prest; and stretching forth

His hands toward the crucifix, exclaim'd,

My God and my Redeemer! where but here,

Before thy aweful presence, in this garb, With penitential ashes thus bestrewn, Could I so fitly answer to the call Of Spain; and for her sake, and in thy

name,

Accept the Crown of Thorns she proffers me!

And where but here, said Roderick in his heart,

Could I so properly, with humbled knee And willing soul, confirm my forfeiture?..

The action follow'd on that secret thought:

He knelt, and took Pelayo's hand, and cried,

First of the Spaniards, let me with this kiss

Do homage to thee here, my Lord and King!..

With voice unchanged and steady countenance

He spake; but when Siverian follow'd him.

The old man trembled as his lips pronounced

The faltering vow; and rising he exclaim'd,

God grant thee, O my Prince, a better fate Than thy poor kinsman's, who in happier days

Received thy homage here! Grief ehoak'd his speech,

And, bursting into tears, he sobb'd aloud.

Tears too adown Pelayo's manly cheek Roll'd silently. Roderick alone appear'd

Unmoved and calm; for now the royal Goth

Had offer'd his accepted sacrifice,

And therefore in his soul he felt that peace

Which follows painful duty well perform'd, . .

Perfect and heavenly peace, . . the peace of God.

VIII. ALPHONSO

Fain would Pelayo have that hour obey'd

The call, commencing his adventurous flight,

As one whose soul impatiently endured His country's thraldom, and in daily prayer

Imploring her deliverance, cried to Heaven.

How long, O Lord, how long!.. But other thoughts

Curbing his spirit, made him yet awhile

Sustain the weight of bondage. Him alone,

Of all the Gothic baronage, the Moors Watch'd with regard of wary policy, . . Knowing his powerful name, his noble mind.

And how in him the old Iberian blood, Of royal and remotest ancestry,

From undisputed source flow'd undefiled;

His mother's after-guilt attainting not The claim legitimate he derived from her,

Her first-born in her time of innocence. He too of Chindasuintho's regal line Sole remnant now, drew after him the love

Of all true Goths, uniting in himself 20 Thus by this double right, the general heart

Of Spain. For this the renegado crew, Wretches in whom their conscious guilt and fear

Engender'd cruellest hatred, still advised

The extinction of Pelayo's house; but most

The apostate Prelate, in iniquity
Witiza's genuine brother as in blood,
Orpas, pursued his life. He never
ceased

With busy zeal, true traitor, to infuse His deadly rancour in the Moorish chief; Their only danger, ever he observed, 31 Was from Pelayo; root his lineage out, The Caliph's empire then would be secure,

And universal Spain, all hope of change Being lost, receive the Prophet's conquering law.

Then did the Arch-villain urge the Moor at once

To cut off future peril, telling him

Death was a trusty keeper, and that
none

E'er broke the prison of the grave. But here

Keen malice overshot its mark: the Moor, 40

Who from the plunder of their native land

Had bought the recreant crew that join'd his arms,

Or cheaplier with their own possessions bribed

Their sordid souls, saw through the flimsy show

Of policy wherewith they sought to cloak Old enmity, and selfish aims: he scorn'd To let their private purposes incline His counsels, and believing Spain sub-

His counsels, and believing Spain subdued,

Smiled, in the pride of power and victory,

Disdainful at the thought of farther strife. 50

Howbeit he held Pelayo at his court, And told him that until his countrymen Submissively should lay their weapons down.

He from his children and paternal hearth

Apart must dwell; nor hope to see again His native mountains and their vales beloved,

Till all the Asturian and Cantabrian hills

Had bow'd before the Caliph; Cordoba Must be his nightly prison till that hour. This night, by special favour from the Moor

Ask'd and vouchsafed, he pass'd without the walls,

Keeping his yearly vigil; on this night Therefore the princely Spaniard could not fly,

Being thus in strongest bonds by honour held;

Nor would he by his own escape expose To stricter bondage, or belike to death, Count Pedro's son. The ancient enmity
Of rival houses from Pelayo's heart
Had, like a thing forgotten, pass'd away;
He pitied child and parent, separated 70
By the stern mandate of unfeeling
power,

And almost with a father's eyes beheld The boy, his fellow in captivity.

For young Alphonso was in truth an heir Of nature's largest patrimony; rich In form and feature, growing strength of limb,

A gentle heart, a soul affectionate,

A joyous spirit fill'd with generous thoughts,

And genius heightening and ennobling all;

The blossom of all manly virtues made His boyhood beautiful. Shield, gracious Heaven, 81

In this ungenial season perilous, . .

Thus would Pelayo sometimes breathe in prayer

The aspirations of prophetic hope, . . Shield, gracious Heaven, the blooming tree! and let

This goodly promise, for thy people's sake,

Yield its abundant fruitage.

When the Prince.

With hope and fear and grief and shame disturb'd,

And sad remembrance, and the shadowy light

Of days before him, thronging as in dreams, 90

Whose quick succession fill'd and overpower'd

Awhile the unresisting faculty,

Could in the calm of troubled thoughts subdued

Seek in his heart for counsel, his first care

Was for the boy; how best they might

The Moor, and renegade's more watchful eye;

And leaving in some unsuspicious guise The city, through what unfrequented track

Safeliest pursue with speed their dangerous way.

Consumed in cares like these, the fleeting hours 100

Went by. The lamps and tapers now grew pale,

And through the eastern window slanting fell

The roseate ray of morn. Within those walls

Returning day restored no cheerful sounds

Or joyous motions of awakening life; But in the stream of light the speckled motes,

As if in mimickry of insect play,

Floated with mazy movement. Sloping down

Over the altar pass'd the pillar'd beam, And rested on the sinful woman's grave As if it enter'd there, a light from Heaven.

So be it! cried Pelayo, even so!

As in a momentary interval,

When thought expelling thought, had left his mind

Open and passive to the influxes

Of outward sense, his vacant eye was there, . .

So be it, Heavenly Father, even so! Thus may thy vivifying goodness shed Forgiveness there; for let not thou the groans

Of dying penitence, nor my bitter prayers 120

Before thy mercy-seat, be heard in vain!

And thou, poor soul, who from the dolorous house

Of weeping and of pain, dost look to me To shorten and assuage thy penal term, Pardon me that these hours in other thoughts

And other duties than this garb, this night

Enjoin, should thus have pass'd! Our mother-land

Exacted of my heart the sacrifice:

And many a vigil must thy son perform Henceforth in woods and mountain

fastnesses, 130

And tented fields, outwatching for her sake

The starry host, and ready for the work Of day, before the sun begins his course.

The noble Mountaineer, concluding then

With silent prayer the service of the night,

Went forth. Without the porch awaiting him

He saw Alphonso, pacing to and fro

With patient step and eye reverted oft.

He, springing forward when he heard
the door

Move on its heavy hinges, ran to him, And welcomed him with smiles of youthful love.

I have been watching yonder moon, quoth he,

How it grew pale and paler as the sun Scatter'd the flying shades; but woe is me.

For on the towers of Cordoba the while That baleful crescent glitter'd in the morn,

And with its insolent triumph seem'd to mock

The omen I had found. . . Last night I dreamt

That thou wert in the field in arms for Spain,

And I was at thy side: the infidels 150 Beset us round, but we with our good swords Hew'd out a way. Methought I stabb'd a Moor

Who would have slain thee; but with that I woke

For joy, and wept to find it but a dream.

Thus as he spake a livelier glow o'erspread

His cheek, and starting tears again suffused

The brightening lustre of his eyes. The Prince

Regarded him a moment steadfastly,

As if in quick resolve; then looking round

On every side with keen and rapid glance, 160

Drew him within the church. Alphonso's heart

Throbb'd with a joyful boding as he mark'd

The calmness of Pelayo's countenance Kindle with solemn thoughts, expressing now

High purposes of resolute hope. He gazed

All eagerly to hear what most he wish'd.

If, said the Prince, thy dream were verified,

And I indeed were in the field in arms

For Spain, . . wouldst thou be at

Pelayo's side? . .

If I should break these bonds, and fly to rear 170

Our country's banner on our native hills, Wouldst thou, Alphonso, share my dangerous flight,

Dear boy, . . and wilt thou take thy lot with me

For death, or for deliverance?

Shall I swear?

Replied the impatient boy; and laying hand

Upon the altar, on his knee he bent, Looking towards Pelayo with such joy Of reverential love, as if a God

Were present to receive the eager vow. Nav. quoth Pelavo: what hast thou to

do

With oaths? . . Bright emanation as thou art,

It were a wrong to thy unsullied soul, A sin to nature, were I to require

Promise or vow from thee! Enough for

That thy heart answers to the stirring call.

Alphonso, follow thou in happy faith Alway the indwelling voice that counsels thee:

And then, let fall the issue as it may, Shall all thy paths be in the light of Heaven.

The peace of Heaven be with thec in all hours.

How then, exclaim'd the boy, shall I discharge

The burthen of this happiness,.. how ease My overflowing soul!.. Oh, gracious God,

Shall I behold my mother's face again,...
My father's hall, .. my native hills and
vales.

And hear the voices of their streams again, . .

And free as I was born amid those scenes Beloved, maintain my country's freedom there, . .

Or, failing in the sacred enterprise,

Die as becomes a Spaniard?.. Saying thus, 200

He lifted up his hands and eyes toward The image of the Crucified, and cried,

O Thou who didst with thy most precious blood

Redeem us, Jesu! help us while we seek Earthly redemption from this yoke of shame

And misbelief and death.

The noble boy

Then rose, and would have knelt again to clasp

Pelayo's knees, and kiss his hand in act Of homage; but the Prince, preventing this.

Bent over him in fatherly embrace, 220 And breathed a fervent blessing on his head.

IX. FLORINDA

THERE sate a woman like a supplicant, Muffled and cloak'd, before Pelayo's gate,

Awaiting when he should return that morn.

She rose at his approach, and bow'd her head,

And, with a low and trembling utterance, Besought him to vouchsafe her speech within

In privacy. And when they were alone, And the doors closed, she knelt and claspt his knees,

Saying, a boon! a boon! This night, O Prince,

Hast thou kept vigil for thy mother's soul:

For her soul's sake, and for the soul of

Whom once, in happier days, of all mankind

Thou heldest for thy chosen bosom friend,

Oh for the sake of his poor suffering soul, Refuse me not!

How should I dare refuse, Being thus adjured? he answer'd. Thy request

Is granted, woman, . . be it what it may So it be lawful, and within the bounds Of possible achievement: . . aught unfit Thou wouldst not with these adjurations seek.

But who thou art, I marvel, that dost touch

Upon that string, and ask in Roderick's name!..

She bared her face, and, looking up, replied,

Florinda!.. Shrinking then, with both her hands

She hid herself, and bow'd her head abased

Upon her knee, . . as one who, if the grave

Had oped beneath her, would have thrown herself,

Even like a lover, in the arms of Death.

Pelayo stood confused: he had not seen

Count Julian's daughter since in Roderick's court, 30

Glittering in beauty and in innocence, A radiant vision, in her joy she moved; More like a poet's dream, or form divine, Heaven's prototype of perfect womanhood.

So lovely was the presence, . . than a thing

Of earth and perishable elements.

Now had he seen her in her windingsheet,

Less painful would that spectacle have proved;

For peace is with the dead, and piety Bringeth a patient hope to those who mourn 40

O'er the departed; but this alter'd face, Bearing its deadly sorrow character'd, Came to him like a ghost, which in the grave

Could find no rest. He, taking her cold hand.

Raised her, and would have spoken; but his tongue

Fail'd in its office, and could only speak In under tones compassionate her name. The voice of pity soothed and melted her;

And when the Prince bade her be comforted,

Proffering his zealous aid in whatsoe'er Might please her to appoint, a feeble smile 51

Pass'd slowly over her pale countenance, Like moonlight on a marble statue. Heaven

Requite thee, Prince! she answer'd.

All I ask

Is but a quiet resting-place, wherein

A broken heart, in prayer and humble hope,

May wait for its deliverance. Even this My most unhappy fate denies me here. Griefs which are known too widely and too well

I need not now remember. I could bear 60

Privation of all Christian ordinances, The woe which kills hath saved me too, and made

A temple of this ruin'd tabernacle,

Wherein redeeming God doth not disdain

To let his presence shine. And I could bear

To see the turban on my father's brow,.. Sorrow beyond all sorrows, .. shame of shames...

Yet to be borne, while I with tears of blood,

And throes of agony, in his behalf

Implore and wrestle with offended
Heaven. 70

This I have borne resign'd: but other ills
And worse assail me now; the which
to bear.

If to avoid be possible, would draw Damnation down. Orpas, the perjured Priest.

The apostate Orpas, claims me for his bride.

Obdurate as he is, the wretch profanes My sacred woe, and woos me to his bed, The thing I am, . . the living death thou seest!

Miscreant! exclaim'd Pelayo. Might I meet

That renegado, sword to scymitar, 80 In open field, never did man approach The altar for the sacrifice in faith

More sure, than I should hew the villain

But how should Julian favour his demand?..

Julian, who hath so passionately loved His child, so dreadfully revenged her wrongs!

Count Julian, she replied, hath none but me,

And it hath, therefore, been his heart's desire

To see his ancient line by me preserved. This was their covenant when in fatal hour

For Spain, and for themselves, in traitorous bond

Of union they combined. My father, stung

To madness, only thought of how to make

His vengeance sure; the Prelate, calm and cool,

When he renounced his outward faith in Christ,

Indulged at once his hatred of the King, His inbred wickedness, and a haughty hope.

Versed as he was in treasons, to direct The invaders by his secret policy,

And at their head, aided by Julian's power, 100

Reign as a Moor upon that throne to which

The priestly order else had barr'd his way.

The African hath conquer'd for himself; But Orpas coveteth Count Julian's lands.

And claims to have the covenant perform'd.

Friendless, and worse than fatherless,
I come

To thee for succour. Send me secretly,... For well I know all faithful hearts must be

At thy devotion, . . with a trusty guide To guard me on the way, that I may reach

Some Christian land, where Christian rites are free,

And there discharge a vow, alas! too long,

Too fatally delay'd. Aid me in this For Roderick's sake, Pelayo! and thy name

Shall be remember'd in my latest prayer.

Be comforted! the Prince replied; but when

He spake of comfort, twice did he break off

The idle words, feeling that earth had none

For grief so irremediable as hers.

At length he took her hand, and pressing it, 120

And forcing through involuntary tears A mournful smile affectionate, he said, Say, not that they get friendless while

Say not that thou art friendless while I live!

Thou couldst not to a readier ear have told

Thy sorrows, nor have ask'd in fitter hour What for my country's honour, for my rank,

My faith, and sacred knighthood, I am bound

In duty to perform; which not to do Would show me undeserving of the names Of Goth, Prince, Christian, even of Man. This day,

Lady, prepare to take thy lot with me.
And soon as evening closes meet me here.
Duties bring blessings with them, and
I hold

Thy coming for a happy augury, In this most aweful crisis of my fate.

X. RODERICK AND FLORINDA

With sword and breast-plate, under rustic weeds

Conceal'd, at dusk Pelayo pass'd the gate,

Florinda following near, disguised alike.

Two peasants on their mules they seem'd, at eve

Returning from the town. Not distant far,

Alphonso by the appointed orangegrove,

With anxious eye and agitated heart,
Watch'd for the Prince's coming.
Eagerly

At every foot-fall through the gloom he strain'd

His sight, nor did he recognize him when The Chieftain thus accompanied drew nigh;

And when the expected signal called him on,

Doubting this female presence, half in fear

Obey'd the call. Pelayo too perceived The boy was not alone; he not for that Delay'd the summons, but lest need should be.

Laying hand upon his sword, toward him bent

In act soliciting speech, and low of voice Enquired if friend or foe. Forgive me, cried

Alphonso, that I did not tell thee this, 20

Full as I was of happiness, before.

'Tis Hoya, servant of my father's house, Unto whose dutiful care and love, when sent

To this vile bondage, I was given in charge.

How could I look upon my father's face If I had in my joy deserted him,

Who was to me found faithful?.. Right! replied

The Prince; and viewing him with silent joy,

Blessed the Mother, in his heart he said, Who gave thee birth! but sure of womankind 30

Most blessed she whose hand her happy stars

Shall link with thine! and with that thought the form

Of Hermesind, his daughter, to his soul Came in her beauty.

Soon by devious tracks

They turn'd aside. The favouring moon arose,

To guide them on their flight through upland paths

Remote from frequentage, and dales retired.

Forest and mountain glen. Before their feet

The fire-flies, swarming in the woodland shade,

Sprung up like sparks, and twinkled round their way;
40

The timorous blackbird, starting at their step,

Fled from the thicket with shrill note of fear:

And far below them in the peopled dell, When all the soothing sounds of eve had ceased, *

The distant watch-dog's voice at times was heard,

Answering the nearer wolf. All through the night

Among the hills they travell'd silently: Till when the stars were setting, at what

The breath of Heaven is coldest, they beheld

Within a lonely grove the expected fire, Where Roderick and his comrade anxiously

Look'd for the appointed meeting. Halting there.

They from the burthen and the bit relieved

Their patient bearers, and around the fire

Partook of needful food and grateful

Bright rose the flame replenish'd; it illumed

The cork-tree's furrow'd rind, its rifts and swells

And redder scars, . . and where its aged boughs

O'erbower'd the travellers, cast upon the leaves

A floating, grey, unrealizing gleam. Alphonso, light of heart, upon the heath Lay carelessly dispread, in happy dreams

Of home; his faithful Hoya slept beside. Years and fatigue to old Siverian brought

Easy oblivion: and the Prince himself. Yielding to weary nature's gentle will, Forgot his cares awhile. Florinda sate Beholding Roderick with fix'd eyes intent.

Yet unregardant of the countenance Whereon they dwelt; in other thoughts absorb'd.

Collecting fortitude for what she yearn'd, Yet trembled to perform. Her steady look

Disturb'd the Goth, albeit he little Their presence help'd him to subdue ween'd

What agony awaited him that hour. Her face, well nigh as changed as his, was now

Half hidden, and the lustre of her eve Extinct: nor did her voice awaken in

One startling recollection when she spake, So altered were its tones.

Father, she said.

All thankful as I am to leave behind 80 The unhappy walls of Cordoba, not less Of consolation doth my heart receive At sight of one to whom I may disclose The sins which trouble me, and at his feet

Lay down repentantly, in Jesu's name, The burthen of my spirit. In his name Hear me, and pour into a wounded soul The balm of pious counsel... Saying thus. She drew toward the minister ordain'd. And kneeling by him, Father, dost thou know

The wretch who kneels beside thee? she enquired.

He answered, Surely we are each to each Equally unknown.

Then said she, Here thou seest One who is known too fatally for all, ... The daughter of Count Julian. . . Well it was

For Roderick that no eye beheld him

From head to foot a sharper pang than death

Thrill'd him; his heart, as at a mortal stroke.

Ceased from its functions: his breath fail'd, and when

The power of life recovering set its springs 100

Again in action, cold and clammy sweat Starting at every pore suffused his frame.

himself;

For else, had none been nigh, he would have fallen

Before Florinda prostrate on the earth, And in that mutual agony belike

Both souls had taken flight. She mark'd him not;

For having told her name, she bow'd her head,

Breathing a short and silent prayer to Heaven, 109

While, as a penitent, she wrought herself To open to his eye her hidden wounds.

Father, at length she said, all tongues amid

This general ruin shed their bitterness On Roderick, load his memory with reproach,

And with their curses persecute his soul...

Why shouldst thou tell me this? exclaim'd the Goth,

From his cold forehead wiping as he spake The death-like moisture: . . Why of Roderick's guilt

Tell me? Or thinkest thou I know it not?

Alas! who hath not heard the hideous tale 120

Of Roderick's shame! Babes learn it from their nurses,

And children, by their mothers unreproved,

Link their first execrations to his name. Oh, it hath caught a taint of infamy, That, like Iscariot's, through all time

shall last, Reeking and fresh for ever!

There! she cried,

Drawing her body backward where she knelt.

And stretching forth her arms with head upraised, .

There! it pursues me still!.. I came to thee,

Father, for comfort, and thou heapest fire 130

Upon my head. But hear me patiently, And let me undeceive thee; self-abased, Not to arraign another, do I come;...

I come a self-accuser, self-condemn'd

To take upon myself the pain deserved; For I have drunk the cup of bitterness, And having drunk therein of heavenly grace,

I must not put away the cup of shame.

Thus as she spake she falter'd at the close,

And in that dying fall her voice sent forth Somewhat of its original sweetness. Thou!..

Thou self-abased! exclaim'd the astonish'd King;...

Thou self-condemn'd!.. The cup of shame for thee!

Thee.. thee, Florinda!.. But the very excess

Of passion check'd his speech, restraining thus

From farther transport, which had haply else

Master'd him; and he sate like one entranced,

Gazing upon that countenance so fallen, So changed: her face, raised from its muffler now,

Was turn'd toward him, and the firelight shone

Full on its mortal paleness; but the shade Conceal'd the King.

She roused him from the spell Which held him like a statue motionless. Thou too, quoth she, dost join the general curse,

Like one who when he sees a felon's grave,

Casting a stone there as he passes by, Adds to the heap of shame. Oh what are we, Frail creatures as we are, that we should

In judgement man on man! and what were we.

If the All-merciful should mete to us 160 With the same rigorous measure wherewithal

Sinner to sinner metes! But God beholds

The secrets of the heart, . . therefore his name

Is Merciful. Servant of God, see thou The hidden things of mine, and judge thou then

In charity thy brother who hath fallen. . . Nay, hear me to the end! I loved the King, . .

Tenderly, passionately, madly loved him.

Sinful it was to love a child of earth With such entire devotion as I loved 170 Roderick, the heroic Prince, the glorious Goth!

And yet methought this was its only

The imaginative passion seem'd so

Quiet and calm like duty, hope nor fear Disturb'd the deep contentment of that

He was the sunshine of my soul, and

A flower. I lived and flourish'd in his light.

Oh bear not with me thus impatiently! No tale of weakness this, that in the act Of penitence, indulgent to itself, With garrulous palliation half repeats The sin it ill repents. I will be brief, And shrink not from confessing how the love

Which thus began in innocence, betray'd My unsuspecting heart; nor me alone, But him, before whom, shining as he Might flow in joy and fulness; nor was he shone

With whatsoe'er is noble, whatsoe'er Is lovely, whatsoever good and great. I was as dust and ashes. . . him. alas! This glorious being, this exalted Prince, Even him, with all his royalty of soul. Did this ill-omen'd, this accursed love. To his most lamentable fall betray And utter ruin. Thus it was: King.

By counsels of cold statesmen ill-advised.

To an unworthy mate had bound himself

In politic wedlock. Wherefore should I tell

How Nature upon Egilona's form,

Profuse of beauty, lavishing her gifts, Left, like a statue from the graver's

hands.

Deformity and hollowness beneath

The rich external? For the love of pomp

And emptiest vanity, hath she not incurr'd

The grief and wonder of good men, the gibes

Of vulgar ribaldry, the reproach of all; Profaning the most holy sacrament

Of marriage, to become chief of the wives

Of Abdalaziz, of the Infidel,

The Moor, the tyrant-enemy of Spain! All know her now: but they alone who knew

What Roderick was can judge his wretchedness.

To that light spirit and unfeeling heart In hopeless bondage bound. No children rose

From this unhappy union, towards whom

The springs of love within his soul con-

One, like Witiza, of the vulgar crew,

Who in promiscuous appetite can find All their vile nature seeks. Alas for

Exuberant health diseases him, frail worm!

And the slight bias of untoward chance Makes his best virtue from the even line, With fatal declination, swerve aside.

Ay, thou mayest groan for poor mortality, . .

Well, Father, mayest thou groan!

My evil fate

Made me an inmate of the royal house, And Roderick found in me, if not a heart Like his. . . for who was like the heroic Goth?

One which at least felt his surpassing worth,

And loved him for himself... A little yet
Bear with me, reverend Father, for I
touch

Upon the point, and this long prologue goes,

As justice bids, to palliate his offence, Not mine. The passion, which I fondly thought

Such as fond sisters for a brother feel, Grew day by day, and strengthen'd in its growth,

Till the beloved presence had become Needful as food or necessary sleep,

My hope, light, sunshine, life, and every thing.

Thus lapt in dreams of bliss, I might have lived 240

Contented with this pure idolatry,

Had he been happy: but I saw and

The inward discontent and household griefs

Which he subdued in silence; and alas!

Pity with admiration mingling then,

Alloy'd and lower'd and humanized my
love.

Till to the level of my lowliness

It brought him down; and in this treacherous heart

Too often the repining thought arose, That if Florinda had been Roderick's

Queen,

Then might domestic peace and happiness

Have bless'd his home and crown'd our wedded loves.

Too often did that sinful thought recur, Too feebly the temptation was repell'd.

See, Father, I have probed my inmost soul;

Have search'd to its remotest source the sin;

And tracing it through all its specious forms

Of fair disguisement, I present it now, Even as it lies before the eye of God,

Bare and exposed, convicted and condemn'd. 260

One eve, as in the bowers which overhang

The glen where Tagus rolls between his rocks

I roam'd alone, alone I met the King. His countenance was troubled, and his apeech

Like that of one whose tongue to light discourse

At fits constrain'd, betrays a heart disturb'd:

I too, albeit unconscious of his thoughts, With anxious looks reveal'd what wandering words

In vain essay'd to hide. A little while
Did this oppressive intercourse endure,
Till our eyes met in silence, each to each
Telling their mutual tale, then consciously

Together fell abash'd. He took my hand And said, Florinda, would that thou and I

Earlier had met! oh what a blissful lot

Had then been mine, who might have found in thee

The sweet companion and the friend endear'd,

A fruitful wife and crown of earthly joys!

Thou too shouldst then have been of
womankind

Happiest, as now the loveliest. . . And with that, 280

First giving way to passion first disclosed,

He press'd upon my lips a guilty kiss, . . Alas! more guiltily received than given. Passive and yielding, and yet self-reproach'd,

Trembling I stood, upheld in his embrace;

When coming steps were heard, and Roderick said.

Meet me to-morrow, I beseech thee, here, Queen of my heart! Oh meet me here again,

My own Florinda, meet me here again!..

Tongue, eye, and pressure of the impassion'd hand

290

Solicited and urged the ardent suit,

And from my hesitating hurried lips The word of promise fatally was drawn. O Roderick, Roderick! hadst thou told

me all

Thy purpose at that hour, from what a world

Of woe had thou and I... The bitterness Of that reflection overcame her then,

And choak'd her speech. But Roderick sate the while

Covering his face with both his hands close-prest,

His head bow'd down, his spirit to such point 300

Of sufferance knit, as one who patiently Awaits the uplifted sword.

Till now, said she, Resuming her confession, I had lived, If not in innocence, yet self-deceived,

And of my perilous and sinful state
Unconscious. But this fatal hour reveal'd

To my awakening soul her guilt and shame:

And in those agonies with which remorse, Wrestling with weakness and with cherish'd sin,

Doth triumph o'er the lacerated heart,
That night . . that miserable night . .
I vow'd.

A virgin dedicate, to pass my life Immured; and, like redeemed Magdalen, Or that Egyptian penitent ', whose tears Fretted the rock, and moisten'd round her cave

The thirsty desert, so to mourn my fall.

The struggle ending thus, the victory

Thus, as I thought, accomplish'd, I believed

My soul was calm, and that the peace of Heaven

Descended to accept and bless my vow; And in this faith, prepared to consum-

The sacrifice, I went to meet the King. See, Father, what a snare had Satan laid! For Roderick came to tell me that the Church

From his unfruitful bed would set him free.

And I should be his Queen.

O let me close The dreadful tale! I told him of my

vow;
And from sincere and scrupulous piety,
But more, I fear me, in that desperate

mood
Of obstinate will perverse, the which,
with pride

with pride 330
And shame and self-reproach, doth
sometimes make

A woman's tongue, her own worst enemy,

1 St. Mary the Egyptian (S.).

Run counter to her dearest heart's desire, . .

In that unhappy mood did I resist

All his most earnest prayers to let the power

Of holy Church, never more rightfully Invoked, he said, than now in our behalf, Release us from our fatal bonds. He urged

With kindling warmth his suit, like one whose life

Hung on the issue; I dissembled not 340 My cruel self-reproaches, nor my grief, Yet desperately maintain'd the rash resolve;

Till in the passionate argument he grew Incensed, inflamed, and madden'd or possess'd,...

For Hell too surely at that hour prevail'd,

And with such subtile to ilsenveloped him, That even in the extremity of guilt

No guilt he purported, but rather meant An amplest recompence of life-long love For transitory wrong, which fate perverse.

Thus madly he deceived himself, compell'd,

And therefore stern necessity excused. Here then, O Father, at thy feet I own Myself the guiltier; for full well I knew These were his thoughts, but vengeance master'd me,

And in my agony I cursed the man Whom I loved best.

Dost thou recall that curse? Cried Roderick, in a deep and inward voice.

Still with his head depress'd, and covering still

His countenance. Recall it! she exclaim'd; 360

Father, I come to thee because I gave
The reins to wrath too long, . . because
I wrought

His ruin, death, and infamy. . . O God, Forgive the wicked vengeance thus indulged.

As I forgive the King!.. But teach me now

What reparation more than tears and prayers

May now be made; . . how shall I vindicate

His injured name, and take upon myself....

Daughter of Julian, firmly he replied, Speak not of that, I charge thee! On his fame 370 The Ethiop dye, fixed ineffaceably,

For ever will abide; so it must be, So should be: 'tis his rightful punish-

ment;
And if to the full measure of his sin
The punishment hath fallen, the more

our hope
That through the blood of Jesus he may

That sin forgiven him.

Pausing then, he raised His hand, and pointed where Siverian lay Stretch'd on the heath. To that old man, said he.

And to the mother of the unhappy Goth, Tell, if it please thee, . . not what thou hast pour'd 38r

Into my secret ear, but that the child For whom they mourn with anguish unallay'd,

Sinn'd not from vicious will, or heart corrupt,

But fell by fatal circumstance betray'd.

And if in charity to them thou sayest

Something to palliate, something to

excuse

An act of sudden frenzy when the Fiend O'ercame him, thou wilt do for Roderick All he could ask thee, all that can be done

On earth, and all his spirit could endure.

Venturing towards her an imploring look.

Wilt thou join with me for his soul in prayer?

He said, and trembled as he spake.

That voice

Of sympathy was like Heaven's influence, Wounding at once and comforting the soul.

O Father, Christ requite thee! she exclaim'd;

Thou hast set free the springs which withering griefs

Have closed too long. Forgive me, for I thought 399

Thou wert a rigid and unpitying judge; One whose stern virtue, feeling in itself No flaw of frailty, heard impatiently

Of weakness and of guilt. I wrong'd thee, Father!..

With that she took his hand, and kissing it.

Bathed it with tears. Then in a firmer speech,

For Roderick, for Count Julian and myself.

Three wretchedest of all the human race, Who have destroyed each other and ourselves,

Mutually wrong'd and wronging, let us pray!

XI. COUNT PEDRO'S CASTLE

Twelve weary days with unremitting speed.

Shunning frequented tracks, the travellers

Pursued their way; the mountain path they chose,

The forest or the lonely heath widespread,

Where cistus shrubs sole-seen exhaled

Their fine balsamic odour all around; Strew'd with their blossoms, frail as beautiful.

The thirsty soil at eve; and when the sun

Relumed the gladden'd earth, opening anew

Their stores exuberant, prodigal as frail, Whiten'd again the wilderness. They left

The dark Sierra's skirts behind, and cross'd

The wilds where Ana in her native hills Collects her sister springs, and hurries on Her course melodious amid loveliest glens,

With forest and with fruitage overbower'd.

These scenes profusely blest by Heaven they left,

Where o'er the hazel and the quince the

Wide-mantling spreads; and clinging round the cork

And ilex, hangs amid their dusky leaves Garlands of brightest hue, with redden-

ing fruit
Pendant, or clusters cool of glassy green.
So holding on o'er mountain and o'er
vale.

Tagus they cross'd where midland on his way

The King of Rivers rolls his stately stream;

And rude Alverches wide and stony bed, And Duero distant far, and many a stream

And many a field obscure, in future war For bloody theatre of famous deeds

Foredoom'd; and deserts where in years to come 30

Shall populous towns arise, and crested towers

And stately temples rear their heads on high.

Cautious with course circuitous they shunn'd

The embattled city, which in eldest time Thrice-greatest Hermes built, so fables say,

Now subjugate, but fated to behold. Ere long the heroic Prince (who passing now

Unknown and silently the dangerous track,

Turns thither his regardant eye) come down

Victorious from the heights, and bear abroad 40

Her banner'd Lion, symbol to the Moor Of rout and death through many an age of blood.

Lo, there the Asturian hills! Far in the west,

Huge Rabanal and Foncebadon huge, Pre-eminent, their giant bulk display, Darkening with earliest shade the distant vales

Of Leon, and with evening premature. Far in Cantabria eastward, the long line Extends beyond the reach of eagle's eye, When buoyant in mid-heaven the bird of Jove 50

Soars at his loftiest pitch. In the north, before

The travellers the Erbasian mountains rise,

Bounding the land beloved, their native land.

How then, Alphonso, did thy eager soul

Chide the slow hours and painful way, which seem'd

Lengthening to grow before their lagging pace!

Youth of heroic thought and high desire,
'Tis not the spur of lofty enterprize
That with unequal throbbing hurries

now

The unquiet heart, now makes it sink dismay'd; 60

'Tis not impatient joy which thus disturbs

In that young breast the healthful spring of life;

Joy and ambition have forsaken him, His soul is sick with hope. So near his

His soul is sick with hope. So near his home,

So near his mother's arms; . . alas! perchance

The long'd-for meeting may be yet far off

As earth from heaven. Sorrow in these long months

Of separation may have laid her low; Or what if at his flight the bloody Moor Hath sent his ministers of slaughter forth,

And he himself should thus have brought the sword

Upon his father's head?.. Sure Hoya too

The same dark presage feels, the fearful boy

Said in himself; or wherefore is his

Thus overcast with heaviness, and why Looks he thus anxiously in silence round?

Just then that faithful servant raised his hand,

And turning to Alphonso with a smile, He pointed where Count Pedro's towers far off

Peer'd in the dell below; faint was the smile, 80

And while it sate upon his lips, his eye Retain'd its troubled speculation still.

For long had he look'd wistfully in vain, Seeking where far or near he might espy From whom to learn if time or chance had wrought

Change in his master's house: but on the hills

Nor goat-herd could he see, nor traveller, Nor huntsman early at his sports afield, Nor angler following up the mountain glen

His lonely pastime; neither could he

Carol, or pipe, or shout of shepherd's boy, Nor woodman's axe, for not a human

Disturb'd the silence of the solitude.

Is it the spoiler's work? At yonder

Behold the favourite kidling bleats unheard:

The next stands open, and the sparrows

Boldly pass in and out. Thither he turn'd

To seek what indications were within; The chesnut-bread was on the shelf, the churn.

As if in haste forsaken, full and fresh; The recent fire had moulder'd on the

And broken cobwebs mark'd the whiter space

Where from the wall the buckler and the sword

Had late been taken down. Wonder at first

Had mitigated fear, but Hoya now Return'd to tell the symbols of good hope,

And they prick'd forward joyfully. Ere

Perceptible above the ceaseless sound Of yonder stream, a voice of multitudes, As if in loud acclaim, was heard far off; And nearer as they drew, distincter

Came from the dell, and at Count Pedro's

group,

Maids, mothers, helpless infancy, weak

And wondering children and tumultuous bovs.

Hot youth and resolute manhood gather'd there.

In uproar all. Anon the moving mass Falls in half circle back, a general cry Bursts forth, exultant arms are lifted up, And caps are thrown aloft, as through the gate

Count Pedro's banner came. Alphonso shriek'd

For joy, and smote his steed and gallop'd on.

Fronting the gate the standard-bearer holds

His precious charge. Behind the men divide

In order'd files; green boyhood presses

And waning eld, pleading a youthful soul.

Intreats admission. All is ardour here, Hope and brave purposes and minds resolved.

Nor where the weaker sex is left apart Doth aught of fear find utterance, though perchance 130 Some paler cheeks might there be seen,

some eyes

Big with sad bodings, and some natural tears.

Count Pedro's war-horse in the vacant

Strikes with impatient hoof the trodden

And gazing round upon the martial show, Proud of his stately trappings, flings his head.

And snorts and champs the bit, and neighing shrill

The human swarm were seen, . . a motley | Wakes the near ccho with his voice of joy.

The page beside him holds his master's spear

Count Pedro stands, his countenance resolved

But mournful, for Favinia on his arm

Hung, passionate with her fears, and hold him back.

crew!

She hath not, Pedro, with her frantic words

Bereft thy faculty. . . she is crazed with grief.

And her delirium hath infected these: But, Pedro, thou art calm; thou dost

not share

The madness of the crowd: thy sober

Surveys the danger in its whole extent. And sees the certain ruin, . . for thou know'st

I know thou hast no hope. Unhappy

Why then for this most desperate enterprize

Wilt thou devote thy son, thine only child?

Not for myself I plead, nor even for thee:

Thou art a soldier, and thou canst not

The face of death; and I should welcome it

As the best visitant whom Heaven could send.

Not for our lives I speak then. . . were they worth

The thought of preservation : . . Nature soon

Must call for them; the sword that should cut short

Sorrow's slow work were merciful to us.

But spare Alphonso! there is time and hope

And shield and helmet. In the castle- In store for him. O thou who gavest him life.

> Seal not his death, his death and mine at once !

Peace! he replied: thou know'st there is no choice.

Go not, she cried, with this deluded I did not raise the storm; I cannot turn Its course aside! but where you banner goes

> Thy Lord must not be absent! Spare me then.

> Favinia, lest I hear thy honour'd name Now first attainted with deserved reproach.

> The boy is in God's hands. He who of vore

> Walk'd with the sons of Judah in the fire.

And from the lion's den drew Daniel forth

Unhurt, can save him, . . if it be his will.

Even as he spake, the astonish'd troop set up

A shout of joy which rung through all the hills.

Alphonso heeds not how they break their ranks

And gather round to greet him; from his horse

Precipitate and panting off he springs.

Pedro grew pale, and trembled at his sight: 181

Favinia claspt her hands, and looking

To Heaven as she embraced the boy. exclaim'd.

Lord God, forgive me for my sinful

Unworthy that I am, .. my son, my son!

XII. THE VOW

ALWAYS I knew thee for a generous foe, Pelayo! said the Count; and in our time

Of enmity, thou too, I know, didst feel
The feud between us was but of the house,
Not of the heart. Brethren in arms
henceforth

We stand or fall together: nor will I Look to the event with one misgiving thought, . .

That were to prove myself unworthy now

Of Heaven's benignant providence, this

Scarcely by less than miracle, vouch-safed.

I will believe that we have days in store Of hope, now risen again as from the dead...

Of vengeance,... of portentous victory,... Yea, maugre all unlikelihoods, ... of peace.

Let us then here indissolubly knit Our ancient houses, that those happy days,

When they arrive, may find us more than friends,

And bound by closer than fraternal ties.

Thou hast a daughter, Prince, to whom
my heart

Yearns now, as if in winning infancy 20 Her smiles had been its daily food of love.

I need not tell thee what Alphonso is, . . Thou know'st the boy!

Already had that hope, Replied Pelayo, risen within my soul. O Thou, who in thy mercy from the house

Of Moorish bondage hast deliver'd us, Fulfil the pious purposes for which Here, in thy presence, thus we pledge our hands! Strange hour to plight espousals! yielding half

To superstitious thoughts, Favinia cried, And these strange witnesses! . . The times are strange,

With thoughtful speech composed her Lord replies,

And what thou seest accords with them.

This day

Is wonderful; nor could auspicious
Heaven

With fairer or with fitter omen gild

Our enterprize, when strong in heart and hope

We take the field, preparing thus for works

Of piety and love. Unwillingly I yielded to my people's general voice,

Thinking that she who with her powerful words 40

To this excess had roused and kindled them,

Spake from the spirit of her griefs alone, Not with prophetic impulse. Be that sin

Forgiven me! and the calm and quiet faith

Which, in the place of incredulity, Hath fill'd me, now that seeing I believe, Doth give of happy end to righteous

cause
A presage, not presumptuous, but
assured.

Then Pedro told Pelayo how from vale

To vale the exalted Adosinda went, 50 Exciting sire and son, in holy war

Conquering or dying, to secure their place

In Paradise: and how reluctantly,

And mourning for his child by his own act

Thus doom'd to death, he bade with heavy heart

His banner be brought forth. Devoid alike

Of purpose and of hope himself, he meant

To march toward the western Mountaineers,

Where Odoar by his counsel might direct

Their force conjoin'd. Now, said he, we must haste 60

To Cangas, there, Pelayo, to secure,

With timely speed, I trust in God, thy house.

Then looking to his men, he cried, Bring forth

The armour which in Wamba's wars I wore. . .

Alphonso's heart leapt at the auspicious words.

Count Pedro mark'd the rising glow of iov. . .

Doubly to thee, Alphonso, he pursued, This day above all other days is blest, From whence as from a birth-day thou wilt date

Thy life in arms!

Rejoicing in their task, 70
The servants of the house with emulous love

Dispute the charge. One brings the cuirass, one

The buckler; this exultingly displays
The sword, his comrade lifts the helm on
high:

The greaves, the gauntlets they divide; a spur

Seems now to dignify the officious hand Which for such service bears it to his Lord.

Greek artists in the imperial city forged That splendid armour, perfect in their craft:

With curious skill they wrought it, framed slike 80 To shine amid the pageantry of war, And for the proof of battle. Many a time

Alphonso from his nurse's lap had stretch'd

His infant hands toward it eagerly,

Where gleaming to the central fire it hung

High in the hall; and many a time had wish'd

With boyish ardour, that the day were come

When Pedro to his prayers would grant the boon,

His dearest heart's desire. Count Pedro then

Would smile, and in his heart rejoice to see 90

The noble instinct manifest itself.

Then too Favinia with maternal pride Would turn her eyes exulting to her

And in that silent language bid him mark His spirit in his boy; all danger then Was distant, and if secret forethought faint

Of manhood's perils, and the chance of war.

Hateful to mothers, pass'd across her mind,

The ill remote gave to the present hour A heighten'd feeling of secure delight.

No season this for old solemnities, rer For wassailry and sport; . . the bath, the bed,

The vigil, . . all preparatory rites

Omitted now, . . here in the face of Heaven,

Before the vassals of his father's house, With them in instant peril to partake The chance of life or death, the heroic boy

Dons his first arms; the coated scales of steel

Which o'er the tunic to his knees depend, Young Baron, he began, must do my The hose, the sleeves of mail; bareheaded then

He stood. But when Count Pedro took the spurs

And bent his knee in service to his son, Alphonso from that gesture half drew back.

Starting in reverence, and a deeper hue Spread o'er the glow of joy which flush'd his checks.

Do thou the rest, Pelayo! said the Count:

So shall the ceremony of this hour Exceed in honour what in form it lacks. The Prince from Hova's faithful hand received

The sword; he girt it round the youth, and drew

And placed it in his hand; unsheathing

His own good falchion, with its burnish'd

He touch'd Alphonso's neck, and with a kiss

Gave him his rank in arms.

Thus long the crowd

Had look'd intently on, in silence hush'd:

Loud and continuous now with one accord.

Shout following shout, their acclamations rose;

Blessings were breathed from every heart, and joy,

Powerful alike in all, which as with force Of an inebriating cup inspired 130 The youthful, from the eye of age drew

The uproar died away, when standing forth.

Roderick with lifted hand besought a pause

For speech, and moved towards the youth. I too.

part:

Not with prerogative of earthly power, But as the servant of the living God,

The God of Hosts. This day thou promisest

To die when honour calls thee for thy faith.

For thy liege Lord, and for thy native

The duties which at birth we all con-

Are by the high profession of this hour Made thine especially. Thy noble blood.

The thoughts with which thy childhood hath been fed.

And thine own noble nature more than

Are sureties for thee. But these dreadful times

Demand a farther pledge; for it hath pleased

The Highest, as he tried his Saints of old, So in the fiery furnace of his wrath

To prove and purify the sons of Spain; And they must knit their spirits to the proof,

Or sink, for ever lost. Hold forth thy sword.

Young Baron, and before thy people

The vow which, in Toledo's sacred name, Poor as these weeds bespeak me, I am

To minister with delegated power.

With reverential awe was Roderick

By all, so well authority became

That mien and voice and countenance

Pelayo with complacent eye beheld 160 The unlook'd-for interposal, and the Count

Bends toward Alphonso his approving head.

The youth obedient loosen'd from his belt

The sword, and looking, while his heart beat fast,

To Roderick, reverently expectant stood.

O noble youth, the Royal Goth pursued.

Thy country is in bonds; an impious foe Oppresses her; he brings with him strange laws,

Strange language, evil customs, and false faith,

And forces them on Spain. Swear that thy soul 170

Will make no covenant with these accursed,

But that the sword shall be from this day forth

Thy children's portion, to be handed down

From sire to son, a sacred heritage,

Through every generation, till the work Be done, and this insulted land hath drunk

In sacrifice, the last invader's blood!

Bear witness, ancient Mountains! cried the youth,

And ye, my native Streams, who hold your course

For ever; . . this dear Earth, and yonder Sky, 180

Be witness! for myself I make the vow, And for my children's children. Here I stand

Their sponsor, binding them in sight of Heaven,

As by a new baptismal sacrament, To wage hereditary holy war, Perpetual, patient, persevering war, Till not one living enemy pollute The sacred soil of Spain. So as he ceased,

While yet toward the clear blue firmament

His eyes were raised, he lifted to his lips
The sword, with reverent gesture bending
then

Devoutly kiss'd its cross.

And ye! exclaimed

Roderick, as turning to the assembled troop

He motion'd with authoritative hand, . . Ye children of the hills and sons of Spain!

Through every heart the rapid feeling ran, . .

For us! they answer'd all with one accord,

And at the word they knelt: People and Prince,

The young and old, the father and the son,

At once they knelt; with one accord they cried, 200

For us, and for our seed! with one accord. They cross'd their fervent arms, and with bent head

Inclined toward that aweful voice from whence

The inspiring impulse came. The Royal Goth

Made answer, I receive your vow for Spain

And for the Lord of Hosts: your cause is good.

Go forward in his spirit and his strength.

Ne'er in his happiest hours had Roderick

With such commanding majesty dispensed

His princely gifts, as dignified him now, When with slow movement, solemnly upraised, 211

Toward the kneeling troop he spread his arms,

As if the expanded soul diffused itself, And carried to all spirits with the act Its effluent inspiration. Silently

The people knelt, and when they rose, such awe

Held them in silence, that the eagle's cry.

Who far above them, at her highest flight

A speck scarce visible, gyred round and round,

Was heard distinctly; and the mountain stream, 220

Which from the distant glen sent forth its sounds

Wafted upon the wind, grew audible In that deep hush of feeling, like the

Of waters in the stillness of the night.

XIII. COUNT EUDON

THAT aweful silence still endured, when one,

Who to the northern entrance of the vale

Had turn'd his casual eye, exclaim'd, The Moors!..

For from the forest verge a troop were seen

Hastening toward Pedro's hall. Their forward speed

Was check'd when they beheld his banner spread,

And saw his order'd spears in prompt array

Marshall'd to meet their coming. But the pride

Of power and insolence of long command

Prick'd on their Chief presumptuous:
We are come 10

Late for prevention, cried the haughty Moor,

But never time more fit for punishment!
These unbelieving slaves must feel and
know

Their master's arm! . . On, faithful Musselmen.

On . . on, . . and hew down the rebellious dogs! . .

Then as he spurr'd his steed, Allah is great!

Mahommed is his Prophet! he exclaim'd, And led the charge.

Count Pedro met the Chief In full career; he bore him from his horse

A full spear's length upon the lance transfix'd; 20

Then leaving in his breast the mortal shaft,

Pass'd on, and breaking through the turban'd files

Open'd a path. Pelayo, who that day Fought in the ranks afoot, for other war Yet unequipp'd, pursued and smote the foe,

But ever on Alphonso at his side

Retain'd a watchful eye. The gallant boy Gave his good sword that hour its earliest taste

Of Moorish blood, . . that sword whose hungry edge,

Through the fair course of all his glorious life 30

From that auspicious day, was fed so well.

Cheap was the victory now for Spain achieved:

For the first fervour of their zeal inspired

The Mountaineers, . . the presence of their Chiefs.

The sight of all dear objects, all dear ties, The air they breathed, the soil whereon they trod,

Duty, devotion, faith, and hope and joy. And little had the misbelievers ween'd In such impetuous onset to receive A greeting deadly as their own intent; Victims they thought to find, not men prepared

And eager for the fight: their confidence Therefore gave way to wonder, and dismav

Effected what astonishment began.

Scatter'd before the impetuous Mountaineers.

Buckler and spear and seymitar they dropt.

As in precipitate route they fled before The Asturian sword: the vales and hills and rocks

Received their blood, and where they fell the wolves

At evening found them.

From the fight apart 50 Two Africans had stood, who held in charge

Count Eudon. When they saw their countrymen

Falter, give way, and fly before the foe, One turn'd toward him with malignant

And saying, Infidel! thou shalt not live To join their triumph! aim'd against his

The moony falchion's point. His comrade raised

A hasty hand and turn'd its edge aside, Yet so that o'er the shoulder glancing down

It scarr'd him as it pass'd. The murderous Moor.

Not tarrying to secure his vengeance,

While he of milder mood, at Eudon's feet Fell and embraced his knees. mountaineer

Who found them thus, withheld at | Eudon's voice

His wrathful hand, and led them to his They bless'd the father from whose loins Lord.

Count Pedro and Alphonso and the Prince

Stood on a little rocky eminence

Which overlook'd the vale. Pedro had

His helmet off, and with sonorous horn Blew the recall; for well he knew what thoughts.

Calm as the Prince appear'd and undisturb'd.

Lay underneath his silent fortitude;

And how at this eventful juncture speed Imported more than vengeance. he sent

The long-resounding signal forth, which

From hill to hill, re-echoing far and wide.

Slow and unwillingly his men obey'd The swelling horn's reiterated call:

Repining that a single foe escaped The retribution of that righteous hour.

With lingering step reluctant from the chase

They turn'd, . . their veins full-swoln, their sinews strung

For battle still, their hearts unsatisfied; Their swords were dropping still with Moorish blood,

And where they wiped their reeking brows, the stain

Of Moorish gore was left. But when they came

Where Pedro, with Alphonso at his side, Stood to behold their coming, then they press'd

All emulous, with gratulation round, Extolling for his deeds that day display'd

The noble boy. Oh! when had Heaven, they said,

With such especial favour manifest Illustrated a first essay in arms!

he sprung.

The mother at whose happy breast he fed:

And pray'd that their young hero's fields might be

Many, and all like this.

Thus they indulged

The honest heart, exuberant of love, When that loquacious joy at once was check'd.

For Eudon and the Moor were brought before 100

Count Pedro. Both came fearfully and pale,

But with a different fear: the African Felt at this crisis of his destiny

Such apprehension as without reproach Might blanch a soldier's cheek, when life and death

Hang on another's will, and helplessly
He must abide the issue. But the
thoughts

Which quail'd Count Eudon's heart, and made his limbs

Quiver, were of his own unworthiness, Old enmity, and that he stood in power Of hated and hereditary foes.

I came not with them willingly! he cried,

Addressing Pedro and the Prince at once, Rolling from each to each his restless eyes

Aghast, . . the Moor can tell I had no choice;

They forced me from my castle: . . in the fight

They would have slain me:.. see I bleed! The Moor

Can witness that a Moorish scymitar
Inflicted this:..he saved me from worse
hurt:..

I did not come in arms:.. he knows it all:..

Speak, man, and let the truth be known to clear

My innocence!

Thus as he ceased, with fear And rapid utterance panting openmouth'd,

Count Pedro half represt a mournful smile.

Wherein compassion seem'd to mitigate
His deep contempt. Methinks, said he,
the Moor

Might with more reason look himself to find

An intercessor, than be call'd upon

To play the pleader's part. Didst thou then save

The Baron from thy comrades?

Let my Lord

Show mercy to me, said the Mussulman, As I am free from falsehood. We were left,

I and another, holding him in charge; My fellow would have slain him when he

How the fight fared: I turn'd the scymitar

Aside, and trust that life will be the meed

For life by me preserved.

Nor shall thy trust,

Rejoin'd the Count, be vain. Say farther now,

From whence ye came?.. your orders what?.. what force

In Gegio? and if others like yourselves Are in the field?

The African replied,

We came from Gegio, order'd to secure This Baron on the way, and seek thee here

To bear thee hence in bonds. A messenger

From Cordoba, whose speed denoted well

He came with urgent tidings, was the cause

Of this our sudden movement. We went forth

Three hundred men; an equal force
was sent
148
For Cangas, on like errand as I ween.
Four hundred in the city then were left.

If other force be moving from the south, I know not, save that all appearances

Denote alarm and vigilance.

The Prince

Fix'd upon Eudon then his eye severe; Baron, he said, the die of war is cast; What part art thou prepared to take? against,

Or with the oppressor?

Not against my friends, . .

Not against you!.. the irresolute wretch replied,

Hasty, yet faltering in his fearful speech:
But . . have ye weigh'd it well? . . It is
not yet

Too late, . . their numbers, . . their victorious force,

Which hath already trodden in the dust The sceptre of the Goths:.. the throne destroy'd, ...

Our towns subdued, . . our country overrun, . .

The people to the yoke of their new Lords

Resign'd in peace... Can I not mediate?..

Were it not better through my agency To gain such terms, . . such honourable terms. . .

Terms! cried Pelayo, cutting short at once

That dastard speech, and checking, ere it grew 170

Too powerful for restraint, the incipient wrath

Which in indignant murmurs breathing round,

Rose like a gathering storm, learn thou what terms

Asturias, this day speaking by my voice.

Doth constitute to be the law between Thee and thy Country. Our portentous

As with an earthquake's desolating force, Hath loosen'd and disjointed the whole frame

Of social order, and she calls not now

For service with the force of sovereign
will. 180

That which was common duty in old times,

Becomes an arduous, glorious virtue now; And every one, as between Hell and Heaven,

In free election must be left to chuse.

Asturias asks not of thee to partake

The cup which we have pledged; she claims from none

The dauntless fortitude, the mind resolved,

Which only God can give; . . therefore such peace

As thou canst find where all around is war,

She leaves thee to enjoy. But think not, Count,

That because thou art weak, one valiant arm,

One generous spirit must be lost to Spain! The vassal owes no service to the Lord

Who to his Country doth acknowledge none.

The summons which thou hast not heart to give,

I and Count Pedro over thy domains

Will send abroad; the vassals who were thine

Will fight beneath our banners, and our wants

Shall from thy lands, as from a patrimony

Which hath reverted to the common stock.

Be fed: such tribute, too, as to the Moors

Thou renderest, we will take: it is the price

Which in this land for weakness must be paid

While evil stars prevail. And mark me, Chief!

Fear is a treacherous counsellor! I know Thou thinkëst that beneath his horses' hoofs

The Moor will trample our poor numbers down;

But join not, in contempt of us and Heaven,

His multitudes! for if thou shouldst be found

Against thy country, on the readiest tree 210

Those recreant bones shall rattle in the wind.

When the birds have left them bare.

As thus he spake,

Count Eudon heard and trembled: every joint

Was loosen'd, every fibre of his flesh

Thrill'd, and from every pore effused, cold sweat

Clung on his quivering limbs. Shame forced it forth,

Envy, and inward consciousness, and fear

Predominant, which stifled in his heart Hatred and rage. Before his livid lips Could shape to utterance their essay'd reply, 220

Compassionately Pedro interposed.

Go, Baron, to the Castle, said the Count; There let thy wound be look'd to, and consult

Thy better mind at leisure. Let this
Moor

Attend upon thee there, and when thou wilt,

Follow thy fortunes. . . To Pelayo then He turn'd, and saying, All-too-long, O Prince. Hath this unlook'd-for conflict held thee here, . .

He bade his gallant men begin their march.

Flush'd with success, and in auspicious hour, 230

The Mountaineers set forth. Blessings and prayers

Pursued them at their parting, and the tears

Which fell were tears of fervour, not of grief.

The sun was verging to the western slope

Of Heaven, but they till midnight travell'd on;

Renewing then at early dawn their way, They held their unremitting course from morn

Till latest eve, such urgent cause impell'd;

And night had closed around, when to the vale

Where Sella in her ampler bed receives Pionia's stream they came. Massive and black

Pelayo's castle there was seen; its lines And battlements against the deep blue sky

Distinct in solid darkness visible.

No light is in the tower. Eager to know The worst, and with that fatal certainty To terminate intolerable dread,

He spurr'd his courser forward. All his fears

Too surely are fulfill'd, . . for open stand

The doors, and mournfully at times a dog 250

Fills with his howling the deserted hall. A moment overcome with wretchedness, Silent Pelayo stood! recovering then,

Lord God, resign'd he cried, thy will be

XIV. THE RESCUE

COUNT. said Pelayo, Nature hath assign'd

Two sovereign remedies for human grief :

Religion, surest, firmest, first and best, Strength to the weak and to the wounded balm:

And strenuous action next. Think not I came

With unprovided heart. My noble wife. In the last solemn words, the last fare-

With which she charged her secret messenger,

Told me that whatsoe'er was my resolve, She bore a mind prepared. And well I know 10

The evil, be it what it may, hath found In her a courage equal to the hour.

Captivity, or death, or what worse pangs. She in her children may be doom'd to

Will never make that steady soul repent I too did not Its virtuous purpose. cast

My single life into the lot, but knew These dearer pledges on the die were set: And if the worst have fallen. I shall but

That in my breast, which, with transfiguring power

Of piety, makes chastening sorrow take The form of hope, and sees, in Death, the friend

And the restoring Angel. We must rest Perforce, and wait what tidings night may bring,

Haply of comfort. Ho there! kindle fires.

And see if aught of hospitality Can vet within these mournful walls be On those who led the company. found!

Thus while he spake, lights were descried far off

Moving among the trees, and coming sounds

Were heard as of a distant multitude, 30 Anon a company of horse and foot,

Advancing in disorderly array,

Came up the vale; before them and beside

Their torches flashed on Sella's rippling stream:

Now gleam'd through chesnut groves, emerging now,

O'er their huge boughs and radiated leaves

Cast broad and bright a transitory glare. That sight inspired with strength the mountaineers;

All sense of weariness, all wish for rest

At once were gone; impatient in desire Of second victory alert they stood; 41 And when the hostile symbols, which from far

Imagination to their wish had shaped. Vanish'd in nearer vision, high-wrought

hope Departing, left the spirit pall'd and

blank.

No turban'd race, no sons of Africa

Were they who now came winding up the vale.

As waving wide before their horses' feet The torch-light floated, with its hovering glare

Blackening the incumbent and surrounding night.

Helmet and breast-plate glitter'd as they came.

And spears erect; and nearer as they drew

Were the loose folds of female garments

Who then

Had stood beside Pelayo, might have heard

The beating of his heart.

But vainly there

Sought he with wistful eye the well-known forms

Beloved; and plainly might it now be seen

That from some bloody conflict they return'd

Victorious, . . for at every saddle-bow 60 A gory head was hung. Anon they stopt,

Levelling in quick alarm their ready spears.

Hold! who goes there? cried one. A hundred tongues

Sent forth with one accord the glad reply, Friends and Asturians. Onward moved the lights, . .

The people knew their Lord.

Then what a shout

Rung through the valley! From their clay-built nests,

Beneath the overbrowing battlements, Now first disturb'd, the affrighted martins flew.

And uttering notes of terror short and shrill, 70

Amid the yellow glare and lurid smoke Wheel'd giddily. Then plainly was it shown

How well the vassals loved their generous Lord,

How like a father the Asturian Prince Was dear. They crowded round; they claspt his knees;

They snatch'd his hand; they fell upon his neck, . .

They wept; . . they blest Almighty Providence,

Which had restored him thus from bondage free;

God was with them and their good cause, they said:

His hand was here. . . His shield was over them, . . . 80

His spirit was abroad, . . His power display'd:

And pointing to their bloody trophies then,

They told Pelayo there he might behold The first-fruits of the harvest they should soon

Reap in the field of war! Benignantly, With voice and look and gesture, did the Prince

To these warm greetings of tumultuous joy

Respond; and sure if at that moment aught

Could for a while have overpower'd those fears

Which from the inmost heart o'er all his frame 90

Diffused their chilling influence, worthy pride,

And sympathy of love and joy and hope,

Had then possess'd him wholly. Even now

His spirit rose; the sense of power, the sight

Of his brave people, ready where he led To fight their country's battles, and the thought

Of instant action, and deliverance, . .

If Heaven, which thus far had protected him,

Should favour still, . . revived his heart, and gave

Fresh impulse to its spring. In vain he sought

Amid that turbulent greeting to enquire Where Gaudiosa was, his children where, Who call'd them to the field, who captain'd them:

And how these women, thus with arms and death

Environ'd, came amid their company?

For yet, amid the fluctuating light And tumult of the crowd, he knew them not.

Guisla was one. The Moors had found in her

A willing and concerted prisoner.

Gladly to Gegio, to the renegade 110

On whom her loose and shameless love was bent,

Had she set forth; and in her heart she

The busy spirit, who, with powerful call Rousing Pelayo's people, led them on In quick pursual, and victoriously

Achieved the rescue, to her mind perverse

Unwelcome as unlook'd for. With dismay

She recognized her brother, dreaded now More than he once was dear; her countenance

Was turn'd toward him, . . not with eager joy 120

To court his sight, and meeting its first glance,

Exchange delightful welcome, soul with

Hers was the conscious eye, that cannot chuse

But look to what it fears. She could not shun

His presence, and the rigid smile constrain'd.

With which she coldly drest her features,

Conceal'd her inward thoughts, and the despite

Of obstinate guilt and unrepentant shame.

Sullenly thus upon her mule she sate,
Waiting the greeting which she did not
dare

Bring on. But who is she that at her side.

Upon a stately war-horse eminent, Holds the loose rein with careless hand? A helm

Presses the clusters of her flaxen hair; The shield is on her arm; her breast is mail'd:

A sword-belt is her girdle, and right well

It may be seen that sword hath done its work

To-day, for upward from the wrist her sleeve

Is stiff with blood. An unregardant eye,
As one whose thoughts were not of
earth, she cast

140

Upon the turmoil round. One countenance

So strongly mark'd, so passion-worn was there,

That it recall'd her mind. Ha! Maccabee!

Lifting her arm, exultingly she cried, Did I not tell thee we should meet in joy? Well, Brother, hast thou done thy part, . . I too

Have not been wanting! Now be His the praise,

From whom the impulse came!

That startling call,

That voice so well remember'd, touch'd the Goth

With timely impulse now; for he had seen 150

His Mother's face, . . and at her sight, the past

And present mingled like a frightful dream,

Which from some dread reality derives
Its deepest horror. Adosinda's voice
Dispersed the waking vision. Little
deem'd

Rusilla at that moment that the child, For whom her supplications day and night Were offer'd, breathed the living air. Her heart Was calm; her placid countenance, though grief

Deeper than time had left its traces there, 160

Retain'd its dignity serene; yet when Siverian, pressing through the people, kiss'd

Her reverend hand, some quiet tears ran down.

As she approach'd the Prince, the crowd made way

Respectful. The maternal smile which bore

Her greeting, from Pelayo's heart at once

Dispell'd its boding. What he would have asked

She knew, and bending from her palfrey down.

Told him that they for whom he look'd were safe,

And that in secret he should hear the rest.

XV. RODERICK AT CANGAS

How calmly gliding through the darkblue sky

The midnight Moon ascends! Her placid beams

Through thinly scatter'd leaves and boughs grotesque,

Mottle with mazy shades the orchard slope;

Here, o'er the chesnut's fretted foliage grey

And massy, motionless they spread; here shine

Upon the crags, deepening with blacker night

Their chasms; and there the glittering argentry

Ripples and glances on the confluent streams.

A lovelier, purer light than that of day Rests on the hills; and oh how awefully Into that deep and tranquil firmament The summits of Auseva rise serene!

The watchman on the battlements partakes

The stillness of the solemn hour; he feels

The silence of the earth, the endless sound

Of flowing water soothes him, and the stars,

Which in that brightest moon-light wellnigh quench'd,

Scarce visible, as in the utmost depth Of yonder sapphire infinite, are seen, Draw on with elevating influence 21 Toward eternity the attemper'd mind. Musing on worlds beyond the grave he stands.

And to the Virgin Mother silently

Prefers her hymn of praise.

The mountaineers
Before the castle, round their mouldering
fires.

Lie on the hearth outstretch'd. Pelayo's

Is full, and he upon his careful couch Hears all around the deep and longdrawn breath

Of sleep: for gentle night hath brought to these

Perfect and undisturb'd repose, alike
Of corporal powers and inward faculty.
Wakeful the while he lay, yet more by
hope

Than grief or anxious thoughts possess'd, . . though grief

For Guisla's guilt, which freshen'd in his heart

The memory of their wretched mother's crime,

Still made its presence felt, like the dull sense

o Of some perpetual inward malady;

And the whole peril of the future lay Before him clearly seen. He had heard

How that unworthy sister, obstinate In wrong and shameless, rather seem'd to woo

The upstart renegado than to wait His wooing; how, as guilt to guilt led

Spurning at gentle admonition first, When Gaudiosa hopelessly forbore From farther counsel, then in sullen

Resentful, Guisla soon began to hate The virtuous presence before which she

Her nature how inferior, and her fault 50 How foul. Despiteful thus she grew, because

Who could Humbled vet unrepentant. say

To what excess bad passions might impel A woman thus possess'd? She could not fail

To mark Siverian's absence, for what

Her conscience but too surely had divined;

And Gaudiosa, well aware that all

To the vile paramour was thus made known.

Had to safe hiding-place with timely fear

Removed her children. Well the event had proved

How needful was that caution; for at night

She sought the mountain solitudes, and

Beheld Numacian's soldiers at the gate. Yet did not sorrow in Pelayo's heart For this domestic shame prevail that hour.

down.

The anticipated meeting put to flight These painful thoughts; to-morrow will restore

All whom his heart holds dear: his wife beloved.

No longer now remember'd for regret, 70 Is present to his soul with hope and joy; His inward eye beholds Favila's form In opening youth robust, and Hermesind, His daughter, lovely as a budding rose; Their images beguile the hours of night, Till with the earliest morning he may seek

Their secret hold.

The nightingale not yet Had ceased her song, nor had the early lark

Her dewy nest forsaken, when the Prince Upward beside Pionia took his way 80 Toward Auseva. Heavily to him,

Impatient for the morrow's happiness, Long night had linger'd, but it seem'd more long

To Roderick's aching heart. He too had watch'd

For dawn, and seen the earliest break of

And heard its earliest sounds; and when the Prince

Went forth, the melancholy man was

With pensive pace upon Pionia's side Wandering alone and slow. For he had left

The wearying place of his unrest, that

With its cold dews might bathe his throbbing brow,

And with its breath allay the feverish heat

That burnt within. Alas! the gales of morn

Reach not the fever of a wounded heart! Nor gathering danger weigh his spirit | How shall be meet his Mother's eye, how make

His secret known, and from that voice revered

Obtain forgiveness, . . all that he has now

To ask, ere on the lap of earth in peace.

He lay his head resign'd? In silent
prayer

He supplicated Heaven to strengthen him 100

Against that trying hour, there seeking aid

Where all who seek shall find; and thus his soul

Received support, and gather'd fortitude,

Never than now more needful, for the hour

Was nigh. He saw Siverian drawing near,

And with a dim but quick foreboding met The good old man; yet when he heard him say,

My Lady sends to seek thee, like a knell To one expecting and prepared for death,

But fearing the dread point that hastens on,

It smote his heart. He follow'd silently And knit his suffering spirit to the proof.

He went resolved to tell his Mother all, Fall at her feet, and drinking the last dregs

Of bitterness, receive the only good Earth had in store for him. Resolved for this

He went; yet was it a relief to find That painful resolution must await A fitter season, when no eye but Heaven's Might witness to their mutual agony. 120 Count Julian's daughter with Rusilla sate;

Both had been weeping, both were pale, but calm.

With head as for humility abased

Roderick approach'd, and bending, on his breast

He cross'd his humble arms. Rusilla rose In reverence to the priestly character,

And with a mournful eye regarding him, Thus she began. Good Father, I have heard

From my old faithful servant and true friend,

Thou didst reprove the inconsiderate tongue, 130

That in the anguish of its spirit pour'd A curse upon my poor unhappy child.

O Father Maccabee, this is a hard world, And hasty in its judgements! Time has been,

When not a tongue within the Pyrenees Dared whisper in dispraise of Roderick's name,

Lest, if the conscious air had caught the sound,

The vengeance of the honest multitude Should fall upon the traitorous head, or brand

For life-long infamy the lying lips. 140 Now if a voice be raised in his behalf,

'Tis noted for a wonder, and the man Who utters the strange speech shall be admired

For such excess of Christian charity.

Thy Christian charity hath not been lost:...

Father, I feel its virtue:..it hath been Balm to my heart;.. with words and grateful tears,..

All that is left me now for gratitude, . . I thank thee, and beseech thee in thy prayers

That thou wilt still remember Roderick's name. 150

Roderick so long had to this hour look'd on,

That when the actual point of trial came,

Torpid and numb'd it found him; cold he grew,

And as the vital spirits to the heart Retreated, o'er his wither'd countenance, Deathy and damp, a whiter paleness spread.

Unmoved the while, the inward feeling seem'd.

Even in such dull insensibility

As gradual age brings on, or slow disease, Beneath whose progress lingering life survives 160

The power of suffering. Wondering at himself,

Yet gathering confidence, he raised his eyes,

Then slowly shaking as he bent his head, O venerable Lady, he replied,

If aught may comfort that unhappy soul,

It must be thy compassion, and thy prayers.

She whom he most hath wrong'd, she who alone

On earth can grant forgiveness for his crime,

She hath forgiven him; and thy blessing now

Were all that he could ask, . . all that could bring

Profit or consolation to his soul,

If he hath been, as sure we may believe, A penitent sincere.

Oh had he lived,

Replied Rusilla, never penitence

Had equall'd his! full well I know his heart,

Vehement in all things. He would on himself

Have wreak'd such penance as had reach'd the height

Of fleshly suffering . . yea, which being told

With its portentous rigour should have made

The memory of his fault, o'erpower'd and lost 180
In shuddering pity and astonishment,
Fade like a feebler horror. Otherwise
Seem'd good to Heaven. I murmur not,

nor doubt

The boundless mercy of redeeming love. For sure I trust that not in his offence Harden'd and reprobate was my lost son.

A child of wrath, cut off!.. that dreadful thought,

Not even amid the first fresh wretchedness,

When the ruin burst around me like a flood,

Assail'd my soul. I ever deem'd his fall 190

An act of sudden madness; and this day Hath in unlook'd-for confirmation given A livelier hope, a more assured faith.

Smiling benignant then amid her tears, She took Florinda by the hand, and said.

I little thought that I should live to bless Count Julian's daughter! She hath brought to me

The last, the best, the only comfort earth

Could minister to this afflicted heart,

And my grey hairs may now unto the grave 200

Go down in peace.

Happy, Florinda cried, Are they for whom the grave hath peace in store!

The wrongs they have sustain'd, the woes they bear,

Pass not that holy threshold, where Death heals

The broken heart. O Lady, thou may'st trust

In humble hope, through Him who on the Cross

Gave his atoning blood for lost mankind,

To meet beyond the grave thy child forgiven.

I too with Roderick there may interchange

Forgiveness. But the grief which wastes away

This mortal frame, hastening the happy hour

Of my enlargement, is but a light part Of what my soul endures ! . . that grief hath lost

Its sting: . . I have a keener sorrow

One which, .. but God forefend that dire event, . .

May pass with me the portals of the grave, And with a thought, like sin which cannot die.

Embitter Heaven. My father hath renounced

His hope in Christ! It was his love for me Which drove him to perdition. . . I was born

To ruin all who loved me, . . all I loved! Perhaps I sinn'd in leaving him:.. that

Rises within me to disturb the peace Which I should else have found.

To Roderick then

The pious mourner turn'd her suppliant eyes:

O Father, there is virtue in thy prayers!.. I do beseech thee offer them to Heaven In his behalf! For Roderick's sake, for

Wrestle with Him whose name is Merci-

That Julian may with penitence be touch'd,

And clinging to the Cross, implore that grace

Which ne'er was sought in vain. For Roderick's sake

And mine, pray for him! We have been | For whom thy supplications rise. the cause

Of his offence! What other miseries May from that same unhappy source have risen.

Are earthly, temporal, reparable all: . . But if a soul be lost through our misdeeds.

That were eternal evil! Pray for him. Good Father Maccabee, and be thy prayers

More fervent, as the deeper is the crime.

While thus Florinda spake, the dog who lay

Before Rusilla's feet, eveing him long And wistfully, had recognized at length, Changed as he was and in those sordid weeds.

His royal master. And he rose and lick'd

His wither'd hand, and earnestly look'd

With eyes whose human meaning did not need

The aid of speech; and moan'd, as if at

To court and chide the long-withheld caress.

A feeling uncommix'd with sense of guilt

Or shame, yet painfulest, thrill'd through the King;

But he to self-controul now long inured, Represt his rising heart, nor other tears, Full as his struggling bosom was, let fall Than seem'd to follow on Florinda's words.

Looking toward her then, yet so that still He shunn'd the meeting of her eye, he

Virtuous and pious as thou art, and ripe For Heaven, O Lady, I must think the

Hath not by his good Angel been cast off Lord 261

Whose justice doth in its unerring course Visit the children for the sire's offence, Shall He not in his boundless mercy hear

The daughter's prayer, and for her sake restore

The guilty parent? My soul shall with thine

In earnest and continual duty join. . . How deeply, how devoutly, He will know To whom the cry is raised.

Thus having said,
Deliberately, in self-possession still, 270
Himself from that most painful interview

Dispeeding, he withdrew. The watchful dog

Follow'd his footsteps close. But he retired

Into the thickest grove; there yielding way

To his o'erburthen'd nature, from all eyes

Apart, he cast himself upon the ground, And threw his arms around the dog, and cried,

While tears stream'd down, Thou, Theron, then hast known

Thy poor lost master, . . Theron, none but thou!

XVI. COVADONGA

MEANTIME Pelayo up the vale pursued Eastward his way, before the sun had climb'd

Auseva's brow, or shed his silvering beams

Upon Europa's summit, where the snows Through all revolving seasons hold their seat.

A happy man he went, his heart at rest, Of hope and virtue and affection full, To all exhilarating influences Of earth and heaven alive. With kindred joy

He heard the lark, who from her airy height,

On twinkling pinions poised, pour'd forth profuse,

In thrilling sequence of exuberant song, As one whose joyous nature overflow'd With life and power, her rich and rapturous strain.

The early bee, buzzing along the way, From flower to flower, bore gladness on its wing

To his rejoicing sense; and he pursued, With quicken'd eye alert, the frolic hare, Where from the green herb in her wanton path

She brush'd away the dews. For he long time, 20

Far from his home and from his native hills,

Had dwelt in bondage; and the mountain breeze,

Which he had with the breath of infancy Inhaled, such impulse to his heart restored,

As if the seasons had roll'd back, and life Enjoy'd a second spring.

Through fertile fields He went, by cots with pear-trees.overbower'd,

Or spreading to the sun their trelliced vines;

Through orchards now, and now by thymy banks,

Where wooden hives in some warm nook were hid 30

From wind and shower; and now thro' shadowy paths,

Where hazels fringed Pionia's vocal stream:

Till where the loftier hills to narrower bound

Confine the vale, he reach'd those huts remote

Which should hereafter to the noble line

Of Soto origin and name impart:

A gallant lineage, long in fields of war And faithful chronicler's enduring page Blazon'd: but most by him illustrated, Avid of gold, yet greedier of renown, 40 Whom not the spoils of Atabalipa Could satisfy insatiate, nor the fame

Of that wide empire overthrown appease; But he to Florida's disastrous shores

In evil hour his gallant comrades led, Through savage woods and swamps, and

hostile tribes, The Apalachian arrows, and the snares Of wilier foes, hunger, and thirst, and

Till from ambition's feverish dream the touch

Of Death awoke him; and when he had seen

The fruit of all his treasures, all his toil, Foresight, and long endurance, fade away,

Earth to the restless one refusing rest, In the great river's midland bed he left His honour'd bones.

A mountain rivulet, Now calm and lovely in its summer

course,
Held by those huts its everlasting way
Towards Pionia. They whose flocks
and herds

Drink of its water call it Deva. Here Pelayo southward up the ruder vale 60 Traced it, his guide unerring. Amid heaps

Of mountain wreck, on either side thrown high,

The wide-spread traces of its wintry might,

The tortuous channel wound; o'er beds of sand

Here silently it flows; here from the rock

Rebutted, curls and eddies; plunges here Precipitate; here roaring among crags, It leaps and foams and whirls and hurries on.

Grey alders here and bushy hazels hid The mossy side; their wreath'd and knotted feet 70

Bared by the current, now against its force

Repaying the support they found, upheld

The bank secure. Here, bending to the stream,

The birch fantastic stretch'd its rugged trunk,

Tall and erect, from whence, as from their base,

Each like a tree, its silver branches grew. The cherry here hung for the birds of heaven

Its rosy fruit on high. The elder there Its purple berries o'er the water bent,

Heavily hanging. Here, amid the brook, 80

Grey as the stone to which it clung, half root,

Half trunk, the young ash rises from the rock;

And there its parent lifts a lofty head, And spreads its graceful boughs; the passing wind

With twinkling motion lifts the silent leaves,

And shakes its rattling tufts.

Soon had the Prince

Behind him left the farthest dwellingplace

Of man; no fields of waving corn were here,

Nor wicker storehouse for the autumnal grain;

Vineyard, nor bowery fig, nor fruitful grove; 90

¹ Hernando de Soto (S.).

Only the rocky vale, the mountain stream.

Incumbent crags, and hills that over hills Arose on either hand, here hung with woods

Here rich with heath, that o'er some smooth ascent

Its purple glory spread, or golden gorse: Bare here, and striated with many a hue, Scored by the wintry rain; by torrents here

Riven, and with overhanging rocks abrupt.

Pelayo, upward as he cast his eyes Where crags loose-hanging o'er the narrow pass 100

Impended, there beheld his country's strength

Insuperable, and in his heart rejoiced. Oh that the Musselman were here, he cried.

With all his myriads! While thy day endures.

Moor! thou may'st lord it in the plains; but here

Hath Nature for the free and brave prepared

A sanctuary, where no oppressor's power.

No might of human tyranny can pierce.

The tears which started then sprang not alone 100

From lofty thoughts of elevating joy: For love and admiration had their part, And virtuous pride. Here then thou hast retired.

My Gaudiosa! in his heart he said: Excellent woman! ne'er was richer boon

By fate benign to favour'd man indulged. Than when thou wert before the face of Heaven

brava

And virtuous as thou art! Here thou hast fled.

Thou who wert nurst in palaces, to dwell In rocks and mountain caves! . . The thought was proud,

Yet not without a sense of inmost pain; For never had Pelayo till that hour So deeply felt the force of solitude.

High over head the eagle soar'd screne. And the grey lizard on the rocks below Bask'd in the sun: no living creature

In this remotest wilderness was seen: Nor living voice was there, . . only the

Of Deva, and the rushing of its springs Long in the distance heard, which nearer now.

With endless repercussion deep and loud, Throbb'd on the dizzy sense.

The ascending vale, Long straiten'd by the narrowing mountains, here

Was closed. In front a rock, abrupt and bare.

Stood eminent, in height exceeding far All edifice of human power, by King Or Caliph, or barbaric Sultan rear'd, Or mightier tyrants of the world of old, Assyrian or Egyptian, in their pride; Yet far above, beyond the reach of sight, Swell after swell, the heathery mountain rose.

Here, in two sources, from the living rock The everlasting springs of Deva gush'd. Upon a smooth and grassy plat below, By Nature there as for an altar drest, They join'd their sister stream, which from the earth

Well'd silently. In such a scene rude man

With pardonable error might have knelt, Feeling a present Deity, and made Given me to be my children's mother, His offering to the fountain Nymph devout. 150

The arching rock disclosed above the Look'd eager to her mother silently; 180 springs

A cave, where hugest son of giant birth. That e'er of old in forest of romance 'Gainst knights and ladies waged dis-

courteous war. Erect within the portal might have stood.

The broken stone allow'd for hand and

No difficult ascent, above the base In height a tall man's stature, measured thrice.

No holier spot than Covadonga Spain Boasts in her wide extent, though all her

Be with the noblest blood of martyrdom In elder or in later days enrich'd,

And glorified with tales of heavenly aid By many a miracle made manifest; Nor in the heroic annals of her fame

Doth she show forth a scene of more

Then, save the hunter, drawn in keen pursuit

Beyond his wonted haunts, or shepherd's

Following the pleasure of his straggling flock.

None knew the place.

Pelayo, when he saw 170 Those glittering sources and their sacred

Took from his side the bugle silver-tipt, And with a breath long drawn and slow expired

Sent forth that strain, which, echoing from the walls

Of Cangas, wont to tell his glad return When from the chace he came. At the first sound

Favila started in the cave, and cried. My father's horn! . . A sudden flush suffused

Hermesind's cheek. and she with quicken'd eye

But Gaudiosa trembled and grew pale, Doubting her sense deceived. time

The bugle breathed its well-known notes abroad:

And Hermesind around her mother's neck

Threw her white arms, and earnestly exclaim'd.

'Tis he!.. But when a third and broader

Rung in the echoing archway, ne'er did wand.

With magic power endued, call up a

So strange, as sure in that wild solitude It seem'd, when from the bowels of the

The mother and her children hasten'd forth:

She in the sober charms and dignity Of womanhood mature, nor verging yet Upon decay; in gesture like a Queen, Such inborn and habitual majesty

Ennobled all her steps, . . or Priestess, chosen

Because within such faultless work of Heaven

Inspiring Deity might seem to make Its habitation known. . . Favila such In form and stature as the Sea Nymph's

son. When that wise Centaur from his cave

well-pleased Beheld the boy divine his growing

strength

Against some shaggy lionet essay,

And fixing in the half-grown mane his hands.

Roll with him in fierce dalliance intertwined.

But like a creature of some higher sphere His sister came; she scarcely touch'd the rock.

So light was Hermesind's aërial speed.

Beauty and grace and innocence in her
In heavenly union shone. One who had
held 210

The faith of elder Greece, would sure have thought

She was some glorious nymph of seed divine,

Oread or Dryad, of Diana's train
The youngest and the loveliest: yea,
she seem'd

Angel, or soul beatified, from realms Of bliss, on errand of parental love

To earth re-sent, . . if tears and trembling limbs

With such celestial natures might consist.

Embraced by all, in turn embracing each, 219

The husband and the father for awhile Forgot his country and all things beside: Life hath few moments of such pure delight,

Such foretaste of the perfect joy of Heaven.

And when the thought recurr'd of sufferings past,

Perils which threaten'd still, and arduous toil

Yet to be undergone, remember'd griefs Heighten'd the present happiness; and hope

Upon the shadows of futurity

Shone like the sun upon the morning mists,

When driven before his rising rays they roll, 230

And melt and leave the prospect bright and clear.

When now Pelayo's eyes had drunk their fill

Of love from those dear faces, he went up

To view the hiding-place. Spacious it was

As that Sicilian cavern in the hill

Wherein earth-shaking Neptune's giant son

Duly at eve was wont to fold his flock, Ere the wise Ithacan, over that brute force

By wiles prevailing, for a life-long night Seel'd his broad eye. The healthful air had here 240

Free entrance, and the cheerful light of heaven:

But at the end, an opening in the floor Of rock disclosed a wider vault below,

Which never sun-beam visited, nor breath

Of vivifying morning came to cheer.

No light was there but that which from above

In dim reflection fell, or found its way, Broken and quivering, through the glassy stream,

Where through the rock it gush'd. That shadowy light

Sufficed to show, where from their secret bed 250

The waters issued; with whose rapid course,

And with whose everlasting cataracts Such motion to the chill damp atmosphere

Was given, as if the solid walls of rock Were shaken with the sound.

Glad to respire

The upper air, Pelayo hasten'd back From that drear den. Look! Hermesind exclaim'd,

Taking her father's hand, thou hast not seen

My chamber: . . See! . . did ever ringdove chuse

In so secure a nook her hiding-place, 260 Or build a warmer nest? 'Tis fragrant too,

As warm, and not more sweet than soft: for thyme

And myrtle with the elastic heath are laid.

And, over all, this dry and pillowy moss...

Smiling she spake. Pelayo kiss'd the child.

And, sighing, said within himself, I trust In Heaven, whene'er thy May of life is come.

Sweet bird, that thou shalt have a blither bower!

Fitlier, he thought, such chamber might

Some hermit of Hilarion's school austere, Or old Antonius, he who from the hell Of his bewilder'd phantasy saw fiends In actual vision, a foul throng grotesque Of all horrific shapes and forms obscene Crowd in broad day before his open eyes. That feeling cast a momentary shade Of sadness o'er his soul. But deeper thoughts.

If he might have foreseen the things to

Would there have fill'd him; for within that cave

His own remains were one day doom'd to find

Their final place of rest; and in that spot, Where that dear child with innocent delight

Had spread her mossy couch, the sepulchre

Shall in the consecrated rock be hewn, Where with Alphonso, her beloved lord, Laid side by side, must Hermesind partake

The everlasting marriage-bed, when he, Leaving a name perdurable on earth, Hath changed his earthly for a heavenly crown.

Dear child, upon that fated spot she But to the bosom of their native hills? stood.

In all the beauty of her opening youth, In health's rich bloom, in virgin inno-

While her eyes sparkled and her heart o'erflow'd

With pure and perfect joy of filial love.

Many a slow century since that day hath fill'd

Its course, and countless multitudes have trod

With pilgrim feet that consecrated cave: Yet not in all those ages, amid all

The untold concourse, hath one breast been swoln

With such emotions as Pelayo felt O Gaudiosa, he exclaim'd. That hour. And thou couldst seek for shelter here.

This aweful solitude, in mountain caves! Thou noble spirit! Oh when hearts like thine

Grow on this sacred soil, would it not be In me, thy husband, double infamy. And tenfold guilt, if I despair'd of Spain? In all her visitations, favouring Heaven Hath left her still the unconquerable

mind:

And thus being worthy of redemption, silra 310

Is she to be redeem'd.

Beholding her Through tears he spake, and prest upon her lips

A kiss of deepest love. Think ever thus, She answer'd, and that faith will give the power

In which it trusts. When to this mountain hold

These children, thy dear images, I brought,

I said within myself, where should they

290' I brought them here as to a sanctuary,

Where, for the temple's sake, the indwelling God 320

Would guard his supplicants. O my dear Lord.

Proud as I was to know that they were

Was it a sin if I almost believed,

That Spain, her destiny being link'd with theirs.

Must save the precious charge?

So let us think.

The Chief replied, so feel and teach and

Spain is our common parent: let the

Be to the parent true, and in her strength

And Heaven, their sure deliverance they will find.

XVII. RODERICK AND SIVERIAN

O HOLIEST Mary, Maid and Mother! thou

In Covadonga, at thy rocky shrine,

Hast witness'd whatsoe'er of human bliss Heart can conceive most perfect! Faithful love,

Long crost by envious stars, hath there

Its crown, in endless matrimony given; The youthful mother there hath to the

Her first-born borne, and there, with deeper sense

Of gratitude for that dear babe redeem'd From threatening death, return'd to pay her vows.

But ne'er on nuptial, nor baptismal day, Nor from their grateful pilgrimage discharged.

Did happier group their way down Upon his breast feeding on bitter Deva's vale

Rejoicing hold, than this blest family, O'er whom the mighty Spirit of the

Spread his protecting wings. The children, free

In youthhead's happy season from all cares

That might disturb the hour, vet capable

Of that intense and unalloy'd delight

Which childhood feels when it enjoys

The dear parental presence long deprived:

Nor were the parents now less bless'd than thev.

Even to the height of human happiness; For Gaudiosa and her Lord that hour Let no misgiving thoughts intrude; she fix'd

Her hopes on him, and his were fix'd on Heaven:

And hope in that courageous heart derived

Such rooted strength and confidence assured

In righteousness, that 'twas to him like faith . .

An everlasting sunshine of the soul, 30 Illumining and quickening all its powers.

But on Pionia's side meantime a heart As generous, and as full of noble thoughts.

Lav stricken with the deadliest bolts of

Upon a smooth grey stone sate Roderick

The wind above him stirr'd the hazel boughs.

And murmuring at his feet the river ran. He sate with folded arms and head declined

thoughts,

Till nature gave him in the exhausted sense 40

Of woe a respite something like repose; And then the quiet sound of gentle winds And waters with their lulling consonance Beguiled him of himself. Of all within Oblivious there he sate, sentient alone Of outward nature, . . of the whispering leaves

That soothed his ear, . . the genial breath of Heaven

That fann'd his cheek, . . the stream's perpetual flow,

That, with its shadows and its glancing lights,

Dimples and thread-like motions infinite, 50

For ever varying and yet still the same, Like time toward eternity, ran by.

Resting his head upon his master's knees, Upon the bank beside him Theron lay. What matters change of state and circumstance,

Or lapse of years, with all their dread events,

To him? What matters it that Roderick wears

The crown no longer, nor the sceptre wields?..

It is the dear-loved hand, whose friendly touch

Had flatter'd him so oft; it is the voice, At whose glad summons to the field so oft 61

From slumber he had started, shaking off Dreams of the chace, to share the actual joy;

The eye, whose recognition he was wont To watch and welcome with exultant tongue.

A coming step, unheard by Roderick, roused

His watchful ear, and turning he beheld Siverian. Father, said the good old man, As Theron rose and fawn'd about his knees,

Hast thou some charm, which draws

The hearts of all our house, . . even to the beast

That lacks discourse of reason, but too oft.

With uncorrupted feeling and dumb faith,

Puts lordly man to shame?.. The King replied,

'Tis that mysterious sense by which mankind

To fix their friendships and their loves are led,

And which with fainter influence doth extend

To such poor things as this. As we put off

The cares and passions of this fretful world,

It may be too that we thus far approach
To elder nature, and regain in part

81
The privilege through sin in Eden lost.

The timid hare soon learns that she may trust

The solitary penitent, and birds

Will light upon the hermit's harmless hand.

Thus Roderick answer'd in excursive speech,

Thinking to draw the old man's mind from what

Might touch him else too nearly, and himself

Disposed to follow on the lure he threw, As one whom such imaginations led 90 Out of the world of his own miseries.

But to regardless ears his words were given,

For on the dog Siverian gazed the while, Pursuing his own thoughts. Thou hast not felt, Exclaim'd the old man, the earthquake and the storm:

The kingdom's overthrow, the wreck of Spain,

The ruin of thy royal master's house, Have reach'd not thee!.. Then turning to the King,

When the destroying enemy drew nigh Toledo, he continued, and we fled Before their fury, even while her grief Was fresh, my Mistress would not leave behind

This faithful creature. Well we knew she thought

Of Roderick then, although she named him not:

For never since the fatal certainty Fell on us all, hath that unhappy name, Save in her prayers, been known to pass her lips

Before this day. She names him now, and weeps:

But now her tears are tears of thankfulness. 100

For blessed hath thy coming been to her And all who loved the King.

His faltering voice

Here fail'd him, and he paused: recovering soon,

When that poor injured Lady, he pursued.

Did in my presence to the Prince absolve The unhappy King. . .

Absolve him! Roderick cried. And in that strong emotion turn'd his face

Sternly toward Siverian, for the sense Of shame and self-reproach drove from his mind

All other thoughts. The good old man replied,

Of human judgements humanly I speak. Who knows not what Pelayo's life hath been?

Not happier in all dear domestic ties.

Than worthy for his virtue of the bliss Which is that virtue's fruit; and yet did he

Absolve, upon Florinda's tale, the King. Siverian, thus he said, what most I hoped,

And still within my secret heart believed, Is now made certain. Roderick hath

More sinn'd against than sinning. And with that

He clasp'd his hands, and, lifting them to Heaven,

Cried, Would to God that he were yet alive!

For not more gladly did I draw my aword

Against Witiza in our common cause, Than I would fight beneath his banners now.

And vindicate his name!

Did he say this? The Prince? Pelayo? in astonishment Roderick exclaim'd. . . He said it, quoth the old man.

None better knew his kinsman's noble heart.

None loved him better, none bewail'd him more:

And as he felt, like me, for his reproach A deeper grief than for his death, even so He cherish'd in his heart the constant thought

Something was yet untold, which, being known,

Would palliate his offence, and make the fall

Of one till then so excellently good, Less monstrous, less revolting to belief, More to be pitied, more to be forgiven.

While thus he spake, the fallen King felt his face

Burn, and his blood flow fast. Down. guilty thoughts!

Firmly he said within his soul; lie still, Thou heart of flesh! I thought thou hadst been quell'd,

And quell'd thou shalt be! Help me, O my God,

That I may crucify this inward foe! Yea, thou hast help'd me, Father! I am strong,

O Saviour, in thy strength.

As he breath'd thus

His inward supplications, the old man Eyed him with frequent and unsteady looks.

He had a secret trembling on his lips, And hesitated, still irresolute

In utterance to embody the dear hope: Fain would he have it strengthen'd and assured

By this concording judgement, yet he fear'd

To have it chill'd in cold accoil. A length

Venturing, he brake with interrupted speech

The troubled silence. Father Maccabee, I cannot rest till I have laid my heart Open before thee. When Pelayo wish'd That his poor kinsman were alive to rear His banner once again, a sudden thought.

A hope . . a fancy . . what shall it be call'd?

Possess'd me, that perhaps the wish might see

Its glad accomplishment, . . that Roderick lived,

And might in glory take the field once more

For Spain. . . I see thou startest at the thought!

Yet spurn it not with hasty unbelief, As though 'twere utterly beyond the scope

Of possible contingency. I think That I have calmly satisfied myself How this is more than idle fancy, more Than mere imaginations of a mind 180 Which from its wishes builds a baseless faith.

His horse, his royal robe, his horned helm,

His mail and sword were found upon the field;

But if King Roderick had in battle fallen,

That sword, I know, would only have been found

Clench'd in the hand which, living, knew so well

To wield the dreadful steel! Not in the throng

Confounded, nor amid the torpid stream, Opening with ignominious arms a way

For flight, would be have perish'd!
Where the strife

Was hottest, ring'd about with slaughter'd foes.

Should Roderick have been found: by this sure mark

Ye should have known him, if nought else remain'd.

That his whole body had been gored with wounds,

And quill'd with spears, as if the Moors had felt

That in his single life the victory lay, More than in all the host!

Siverian's eyes Shone with a youthful ardour while he spake,

His gathering brow grew stern, and as he raised

His arm, a warrior's impulse character'd
The impassion'd gesture. But the King
was calm

And heard him with unchanging countenance;

For he had taken his resolve, and felt Once more the peace of God within his soul, As in that hour when by his father's grave

He knelt before Pelayo.

Soon the old man

Pursued in calmer tones, . . Thus much I dare

Believe, that Roderick fell not on that

When treason brought about his overthrow.

If yet he live, for sure I think I know 210 His noble mind, 'tis in some wilderness, Where, in some savage den inhumed, he drags

The weary load of life, and on his flesh As on a mortal enemy, inflicts

Fierce vengeance with immitigable hand.

Oh that I knew but where to bend my
way

In his dear search! my voice perhaps might reach

His heart, might reconcile him to himself, Restore him to his mother ere she dies, His people and his country: with the sword.

Them and his own good name should he redeem.

Oh might I but behold him once again Leading to battle these intrepid bands, Such as he was,.. yea rising from his fall More glorious, more beloved! Soon I believe

Joy would accomplish then what grief hath fail'd

To do with this old heart, and I should die Clasping his knees with such intense delight,

That when I woke in Heaven, even Heaven itself

Could have no higher happiness in store.

Thus fervently he spake, and copious tears 231

Ran down his cheeks. Full oft the Royal Goth, Since he came forth again among mankind.

Had trembled lest some curious eye should read

His lineaments too closely; now he long'd To fall upon the neck of that old man, And give his full heart utterance. But

the sense

Of duty, by the pride of self-controul Corroborate, made him steadily repress His yearning nature. Whether Roderick live, 240

Paying in penitence the bitter price Of sin, he answered, or if earth hath given

Rest to his earthly part, is only known To him and Heaven. Dead is he to the world;

And let not these imaginations rob His soul of thy continual prayers, whose

Too surely, in whatever world, he needs. The faithful love that mitigates his fault, Heavenward addrest, may mitigate his doom.

Living or dead, old man, be sure his soul, . . 250

It were unworthy else, . . doth hold with thine

Entire communion! Doubt not he relies Firmly on thee, as on a father's love,

Counts on thy offices, and joins with thee In sympathy and fervent act of faith,

Though regions, or though worlds, should intervene.

Lost as he is, to Roderick this must be Thy first, best, dearest duty; next must be

To hold right onward in that noble path, Which he would counsel, could his voice be heard.

Now therefore aid me, while I call upon The Leaders and the People, that this day

We may acclaim Pelayo for our King.

XVIII, THE ACCLAMATION

Now, when from Covadonga, down the vale

Holding his way, the princely mountaineer

Came with that happy family in sight Of Cangas and his native towers, far off He saw before the gate, in fair array, The assembled land. Broad banners

were display'd,

And spears were sparkling to the sun,
shields shone.

And helmets glitter'd, and the blairing horn.

With frequent sally of impatient joy, Provoked the echoes round. Well he areeds,

From yonder ensigns and augmented force,

That Odoar and the Primate from the

Have brought their aid; but wherefore all were thus

Instructed as for some great festival, He found not, till Favila's quicker eye Catching the ready buckler, the glad boy Leapt up, and clapping his exultant hands,

Shouted, King! King! my father shall be King

This day! Pelayo started at the word, And the first thought which smote him brought a sigh

For Roderick's fall; the second was of hope.

Deliverance for his country, for himself Enduring fame, and glory for his line.

That high prophetic forethought gather'd strength,

As looking to his honour'd mate, he read

Her soul's accordant augury; her eyes Brighten'd; the quicken'd action of the blood Tinged with a deeper hue her glowing cheek,

And on her lips there sate a smile which spake

The honourable pride of perfect love, 30 Rejoicing, for her husband's sake, to share

The lot he chose, the perils he defied,
The lofty fortune which their faith
foresaw.

Roderick, in front of all the assembled troops,

Held the broad buckler, following to the end

That steady purpose to the which his zeal

Had this day wrought the Chiefs. Tall as himself,

Erect it stood beside him, and his hands Hung resting on the rim. This was an

That sweeten'd life, repaid and recompensed 40

All losses; and although it could not heal

All griefs, yet laid them for awhile to rest. The active agitating joy that fill'd

The vale, that with contagious influence spread

Through all the exulting mountaineers, that gave

New ardour to all spirits, to all breasts Inspired fresh impulse of excited hope,

Moved every tongue, and strengthen'd every limb, . .

That joy which every man reflected saw From every face of all the multitude, 50 And heard in every voice, in every sound, Reach'd not the King. Aloof from sympathy,

He from the solitude of his own soul Beheld the busy scene. None shared or knew

His deep and incommunicable joy;

None but that heavenly Father, who With Odoar, whom of counsel competent alone

Beholds the struggles of the heart, alone Sees and rewards the secret sacrifice.

Among the chiefs conspicuous, Urban stood.

He whom, with well-weigh'd choice, in arduous time.

To arduous office the consenting Church Had call'd when Sindered fear-smitten

Unfaithful shepherd, who for life alone Solicitous, forsook his flock, when most In peril and in suffering they required A pastor's care. Far off at Rome he dwells

In ignominious safety, while the Church Keeps in her annals the deserter's name, But from the service which with daily zeal

Devout her ancient prelacy recalls, Blots it, unworthy to partake her prayers.

Urban, to that high station thus being

From whence disanimating fear had driven

The former primate, for the general weal Consulting first, removed with timely care

The relics and the written works of Saints.

Toledo's choicest treasure prized beyond All wealth, their living and their dead remains:

These to the mountain fastnesses he bore

Of unsubdued Cantabria, there deposed, One day to be the boast of yet unbuilt Oviedo, and the dear idolatry

Of multitudes unborn. To things of Precious or auriphrygiate; state

Then giving thought mature, he held He stood, all else in arms complete, and advice

And firm of heart he knew. What then they plann'd.

Time and the course of over-ruled events To earlier act had ripen'd, than their hope

Had ever in its gladdest dream proposed:

And here by agents unforeseen, and means

Beyond the scope of foresight brought about.

This day they saw their dearest heart's desire

Accorded them: All-able Providence Thus having ordered all, that Spain this hour

With happiest omens, and on surest

Should from its ruins rear again her throne.

For acclamation and for sacring now One form must serve, more solemn for the breach

Of old observances, whose absence here Deeplier impress'd the heart, than all display

Of regal pomp and wealth pontifical, Of vestments radiant with their gems, and stiff

With ornature of gold; the glittering

The long procession, and the full-voiced choir.

This day the forms of piety and war,

In strange but fitting union must combine.

Not in his alb and cope and orary Came Urban now, nor wore he mitre

here. bare of

head o'er 110 His gorget's iron rings the pall was Defiled, and rotting there in sun and thrown

Of wool undved, which on the Apostle's tomb

Gregory had laid, and sanctified with praver:

That from the living Pontiff and the dead

Replete with holiness, it might impart Doubly derived its grace. One Page beside

Bore his broad-shadow'd helm; another's hand

Held the long spear, more suited in these times

For Urban, than the crosier richly wrought

With silver foliature, the elaborate work Of Grecian or Italian artist, train'd 121 In the eastern capital, or sacred Rome, Still o'er the West predominant, though fallen.

Better the spear befits the shepherd's hand

When robbers break the fold. Now he had laid

The weapon by, and held a natural cross Of rudest form, unpeel'd, even as it grew On the near oak that morn.

Mutilate alike

Of royal rites was this solemnity.

Where was the rubied crown, the sceptre where.

And where the golden pome, the proud

Of ermines, aureate vests, and jewelry, With all which Leuvigild for after kings Left, ostentatious of his power? The Moor

Had made his spoil of these, and on the field

Of Xeres, where contending multitudes Had trampled it beneath their bloody feet.

The standard of the Goths forgotten lay

rain.

Utterly is it lost; nor evermore Herald or antiquary's patient search Shall from forgetfulness avail to save Those blazon'd arms, so fatally of old Renown'd through all the affrighted

That banner, before which imperial Rome First to a conqueror bow'd her head abased:

Occident.

Which when the dreadful Hun, with all his powers,

Came like a deluge rolling o'er the world, Made head, and in the front of battle broke

His force, till then resistless; which so

Had with alternate fortune braved the Frank:

Driven the Byzantine from the farthest shores

Of Spain, long lingering there, to final flight;

And of their kingdoms and their name despoil'd

The Vandal, and the Alan, and the Sueve:

Blotted from human records is it now As it had never been. So let it rest

With things forgotten! But Oblivion ne'er

Shall cancel from the historic roll, nor Time.

Who changeth all, obscure that fated

Which brighter now than mountain snows at noon

To the bright sun displays its argent field.

Rose not the vision then upon thy soul.

O Roderick, when within that argent field

Thou saw'st the rampant Lion, red as if Upon some noblest quarry he had roll'd, Rejoicing in his satiate rage, and drunk With blood and fury? Did the auguries Which open'd on thy spirit bring with them

A perilous consolation, deadening heart And soul, yea worse than death, . . that thou through all

Thy chequer'd way of life, evil and good, Thy errors and thy virtues, hadst but been

The poor mere instrument of things ordain'd, . .

Doing or suffering, impotent alike
To will or act, . . perpetually bemock'd
With semblance of volition, yet in all
Blind worker of the ways of destiny!
That thought intolerable, which in the
hour

Of woe indignant conscience had repell'd 180

As little might it find reception now, When the regenerate spirit self-approved Beheld its sacrifice complete. With faith

Elate, he saw the banner'd Lion float Refulgent, and recall'd that thrilling shout

Which he had heard when on Romano's grave

The joy of victory woke him from his dream,

And sent him with prophetic hope to work

Fulfilment of the great events ordain'd, There in imagination's inner world 190 Prefigured to his soul.

Alone, advanced Before the ranks, the Goth in silence

stood,

While from all voices round, loquacious joy

Mingled its buzz continuous with the blast

Of horn, shrill pipe, and tinkling cymbals' clash,

And sound of deafening drum. But when the Prince

Drew nigh, and Urban with the cross upheld

Stept forth to meet him, all at once were still'd

With instantaneous hush; as when the wind,

Before whose violent gusts the forest oaks, 200

Tossing like billows their tempestuous heads,

Roar like a raging sea, suspends its force, And leaves so dead a calm that not a leaf

Moves on the silent spray. The passing air

Bore with it from the woodland undisturb'd

The ringdove's wooing, and the quiet voice

Of waters warbling near.

Son of a race

Of Heroes and of Kings! the Primate thus

Address'd him, Thou in whom the Gothic blood,

Mingling with old Iberia's, hath restored To Spain a ruler of her native line, 211 Stand forth, and in the face of God and

Swear to uphold the right, abate the wrong,

With equitable hand, protect the Cross Whereon thy lips this day shall seal their vow,

And underneath that hallow'd symbol, wage

Holy and inextinguishable war

Against the accursed nation that usurps
Thy country's sacred soil!

So speak of me 219
Now and for ever, O my countrymen!

Replied Pelayo; and so deal with me Here and hereafter, thou, Almighty God.

In whom I put my trust!

Lord God of Hosts,

Urban pursued, of Angels and of Men Creator and Disposer, King of Kings,

Ruler of Earth and Heaven, . . look down this day,

And multiply thy blessings on the head Of this thy servant, chosen in thy sight!

Be thou his counsellor, his comforter,

His hope, his joy, his refuge, and his strength;

Crown him with justice, and with fortitude,

Defend him with thine all-sufficient shield.

Surround him every where with the right hand

Of thine all-present power, and with the might

Of thine omnipotence, send in his aid Thy unseen Angels forth, that potently And royally against all enemies

He may endure and triumph! Bless the land

O'er which he is appointed; bless thou

With the waters of the firmament, the springs 240

Of the low-lying deep, the fruits which Sun

And Moon mature for man, the precious stores

Of the eternal hills, and all the gifts

Of Earth, its wealth and fulness!

Then he took
Pelayo's hand, and on his finger placed
The mystic circlet. . . With this ring,
O Prince.

To our dear Spain, who like a widow now

Mourneth in desolation, I thee wed:

For weal or woe thou takest her, till death

Dispart the union: Be it blest to her, To thee, and to thy seed! 251 Thus when he ceased,

He gave the awaited signal. Roderick brought

The buckler: Eight for strength and stature chosen

Came to their honour'd office: Round the shield

Standing, they lower it for the Chieftain's feet,

Then, slowly raised upon their shoulders, lift

The steady weight. Erect Pelayo stands,

And thrice he brandishes the burnish'd sword.

While Urban to the assembled people cries.

Spaniards, behold your King! The multitude

Then sent forth all their voice with glad acclaim,

Raising the loud Real; thrice did the word

Ring through the air, and echo from the walls

Of Cangas. Far and wide the thundering shout,

Rolling among reduplicating rocks,

Peal'd o'er the hills, and up the mountain vales.

The wild ass starting in the forest glade Ran to the covert; the affrighted wolf Skulk'd through the thicket to a closer brake;

The sluggish bear, awaken'd in his den, Roused up and answer'd with a sullen growl, 271

Low-breathed and long; and at the uproar scared,

The brooding eagle from her nest took wing.

Firm to the last your part in that dread

When Julian and Witiza's viler race Betray'd their country, hear ye from von Heaven

The joyful acclamation which proclaims That Spain is born again! O ve who died

In that disastrous field, and ye who fell From midland regions where Toledo Embracing with a martyr's love your death

Amid the flames of Auria; and all ye Victims innumerable, whose cries unheard

On earth, but heard in Heaven, from all the land

Went up for vengeance; not in vain ye

Before the eternal throne! . . Rest innocent blood!

Vengeance is due, and vengeance will be given,

Rest innocent blood! The appointed age is come!

The star that harbingers a glorious day Hath risen! Lo there the Avenger stands! Lo there

He brandishes the avenging sword! Lo

The avenging banner spreads its argent field

Refulgent with auspicious light! . . Rejoice,

O Leon, for thy banner is displayed, Rejoice with all thy mountains, and thy

And streams! And thou, O Spain, through all thy realms.

For thy deliverance cometh! Even now, As from all sides the miscreant hosts move on; . .

From southern Betis; from the western | Her horns, these purveyors shall become lands.

Heroes and Chiefs of old! and ye who Where through redundant vales smooth Minho flows.

> And Douro pours through vine-clad hills the wealth

> Of Leon's gathered waters; from the plains

> Burgensian, in old time Vardulia call'd, But in their castellated strength ere long To be design'd Castille, a deathless name ;

reigns

Proud city on her royal eminence,

And Tagus bends his sickle round the

Of Roderick's fall; from rich Rioja's fields:

Dark Ebro's shores; the walls of Sal-

Seat of the Sedetanians old, by Rome Caesarian and August denominate,

Now Zaragoza, in this later time

Above all cities of the earth renown'd For duty perfectly perform'd; . . East, West

And South, where'er their gather'd multitudes

Urged by the speed of vigorous tyranny, With more than with commeasurable strength

Haste to prevent the danger, crush the

Of rising Spain, and rivet round her neck The eternal voke, . . the ravenous fowls of heaven

Flock there presentient of their food obscene.

Following the accursed armies, whom too well

They know their purveyors long. Pursue their march.

Ominous attendants! Ere the moon hath fill'd

the prev.

And ye on Moorish not on Christian flesh

Wearying your beaks, shall clog your scalv feet

to know.

Followers and harbingers of blood, the

Of Leon where it bids you to your feast!

Terror and flight shall with that flag go

And Havoc and the Dogs of War and Death.

Thou Covadonga with the tainted stream

Of Deva, and this now rejoicing vale, Soon its primitial triumphs wilt behold! Nor shall the glories of the noon be less

Than such miraculous promise of the dawn:

Witness Clavijo, where the dreadful cry Of Santiago, then first heard, o'erpower'd

The Akbar, and that holier name blasphemed

By misbelieving lips! Simancas, thou Be witness! And do ye your record bear.

Tolosan mountains, where the Almo-

Beheld his myriads scatter'd and destroy'd,

Like locusts swept before the stormy North!

Thou too, Salado, on that later day When Africa received her final foil.

And thy swoln stream incarnadined, roll'd back

The invaders to the deep, . . there shall they toss

Till on their native Mauritanian shore The waves shall cast their bones to whiten there.

XIX. RODERICK AND RUSILLA

WHEN all had been perform'd, the royal Goth

With foreign gore. Soon will ye learn Look'd up towards the chamber in the tower

> Where, gazing on the multitude below, Alone Rusilla stood. He met her eye, For it was singling him amid the crowd;

> Obeying then the hand which beckon'd him.

He went with heart prepared, nor shrinking now,

But arm'd with self-approving thoughts that hour.

Entering in tremulous haste, he closed the door.

And turn'd to clasp her knees; but lo, she spread

Her arms, and catching him in close embrace.

Fell on his neck, and cried, My Son, my Son!..

Ere long, controlling that first agony With effort of strong will, backward she

And gazing on his head now shorn and

And on his furrow'd countenance, exclaim'd.

Still, still, my Roderick! the same noble

The same heroic heart! Still, still, my Son!..

Changed, . . yet not wholly fallen, . . not wholly lost,

He cried, . . not wholly in the sight of Heaven

Unworthy, O my Mother, nor in thine! She lock'd her arms again around his neck.

Saying, Lord, let me now depart in peace!

And bow'd her head again, and silently Gave way to tears.

When that first force was spent, And passion in exhaustment found relief...

I knew thee, said Rusilla, when the dog Rose from my feet, and lick'd his master's hand.

All flash'd upon me then; the instinctive sense

That goes unerringly where reason fails, . . 30

The voice, the eye, . . a mother's thoughts are quick, . .

Miraculous as it seem'd, . . Siverian's tale, . .

Florinda's, . . every action, . . every word, . .

Each strengthening each, and all confirming all,

Reveal'd thee, O my Son! but I restrain'd

My heart, and yielded to thy holier will The thoughts which rose to tempt a soul not yet

Wean'd wholly from the world.

What thoughts? replied Roderick. That I might see thee yet

again
Such as thou wert, she answer'd; not

To Heaven and me restored, but to thyself...

Thy Crown, . . thy Country, . . all within thy reach;

Heaven so disposing all things, that the means

Which wrought the ill, might work the remedy.

Methought I saw thee once again the hope, . .

The strength, . . the pride of Spain! The miracle

Which I beheld made all things possible. I know the inconstant people, how their mind.

With every breath of good or ill report,

Fluctuates, like summer corn before the breeze; 50
Quick in their hatred, quicker in their

Quick in their hatred, quicker in then love,

Generous and hasty, soon would they redress

All wrongs of former obloquy. . . I thought

Of happiness restored, . . the broken heart

Heal'd, . . and Count Julian, for his daughter's sake,

Turning in thy behalf against the Moors His powerful sword:..all possibilities That could be found or fancied, built a dream

Before me; such as easiest might illude A lofty spirit train'd in palaces, 60 And not alone amid the flatteries

Of youth with thoughts of high ambition fed

When all is sunshine, but through years of woe,

When sorrow sanctified their use, upheld By honourable pride and earthly hopes. I thought I yet might nurse upon my knee

Some young Theodofred, and see in him Thy Father's image and thine own renew'd,

And love to think the little hand which there

Play'd with the bauble, should in after days 70

Wield the transmitted sceptre; . . that through him

The ancient seed should be perpetuate,...

That precious seed revered so long,
desired

So dearly, and so wondrously preserved.

Nay, he replied, Heaven hath not with its bolts

Scathed the proud summit of the tree, and left

The trunk unflaw'd; ne'er shall it clothe It was the World's last effort. its boughs

Again, nor push again its sevons forth, Head, root, and branch, all mortified alike!..

Long ere these locks were shorn had I cut off

The thoughts of royalty! Time might

Their growth, as for Manoah's captive

And I too on the miscreant race, like

Might prove my strength regenerate; but the hour.

When, in its second best nativity,

My soul was born again through grace, this heart

Died to the world. Dreams such as thine pass now

Like evening clouds before me; if I

How beautiful they seem, 'tis but to feel

How soon they fade, how fast the night shuts in.

But in that World to which my hopes look on.

Time enters not, nor Mutability;

Beauty and goodness are unfading there:

Whatever there is given us to enjoy, That we enjoy for ever, still the same. . .

Much might Count Julian's sword achieve for Spain

And me, but more will his dear daughter's

Effect in Heaven: and soon will she be

An Angel at the throne of Grace, to plead

In his behalf and mine.

I knew thy heart, 100 She answer'd, and subdued the vain desire.

Thou hast chosen

The better part. Yes, Roderick, even on earth

There is a praise above the monarch's fame.

A higher, holier, more enduring praise, And this will yet be thine!

O tempt me not.

Mother! he cried; nor let ambition take

That specious form to cheat us! What but this.

Fallen as I am, have I to offer Heaven? The ancestral sceptre, public fame, con-

Of private life, the general good report, Power, reputation, happiness, . . what-

The heart of man desires to constitute His earthly weal, . . unerring Justice claim'd

In forfeiture. I with submitted soul Bow to the righteous law and kiss the

Only while thus submitted, suffering thus. . .

Only while offering up that name on earth,

Perhaps in trial offer'd to my choice,

Could I present myself before thy sight; Thus only could endure myself, or fix 121 My thoughts upon that fearful pass, where Death

Stands in the Gate of Heaven! . . Time passes on,

The healing work of sorrow is complete: All vain desires have long been weeded out.

All vain regrets subdued: the heart is dead.

The soul is ripe and eager for her birth. Bless me, my Mother! and come when it will

The inevitable hour, we die in peace.

So saving, on her knees he bow'd his head: 130

She raised her hands to Heaven and blest her child:

Then bending forward, as he rose, em-

And claspt him to her heart, and cried, Once more

Theodofred, with pride behold thy son!

XX. THE MOORISH CAMP

THE times are big with tidings; every hour

From east and west and south the breathless scouts

Bring swift alarums in; the gathering

Advancing from all quarters to one point,

Close their wide crescent. Nor was aid of fear

To magnify their numbers needed now, They came in myriads. Africa had pour'd

Fresh shoals upon the coast of wretched Spain:

Lured from their hungry deserts to the scene

Of spoil, like vultures to the battle-field, Fierce, unrelenting, habited in crimes, 11 Like bidden guests the mirthful ruffians

flock To that free feast which in their Pro-

phet's name Rapine and Lust proclaim'd. Nor were the chiefs

Of victory less assured, by long success Elate, and proud of that o'erwhelming strength.

Which, surely they believed, as it had roll'd

Thus far uncheck'd would roll victorious | Train'd up. The same unnatural rage on,

Till, like the Orient, the subjected West Should bow in reverence at Mahommed's

And pilgrims, from remotest Arctic shores.

Tread with religious feet the burning sands

Of Araby, and Mecca's stony soil.

Proud of his part in Roderick's overthrow.

Their leader Abulcacem came, a man Immitigable, long in war renown'd.

Here Magued comes, who on the conquered walls

Of Cordoba, by treacherous fear betray'd,

Planted the moony standard: Ibrahim

He, who by Genil and in Darro's vales, 30 Had for the Moors the fairest portion won Of all their spoils, fairest and best main tain'd.

And to the Alpuxarras given in trust

His other name, through them preserved in song.

Here too Alcahman, vaunting his late deeds

At Auria, all her children by the sword Cut off, her bulwarks rased, her towers laid low.

Her dwellings by devouring flames consumed.

Bloody and hard of heart, he little ween'd.

Vain-boastful chief! that from those fatal flames

The fire of retribution had gone forth Which soon should wrap him round.

The renegades

Here too were seen, Ebba and Sisibert: A spurious brood, but of their parent's

True heirs, in guilt begotten, and in ill that turn'd

Their swords against their country. made them seek.

Unmindful of their wretched mother's end.

Pelayo's life. No enmity is like

Domestic hatred. For his blood they thirst.

As if that sacrifice might satisfy

Witiza's guilty ghost, efface the shame Of their adulterous birth, and one crime more

Crowning a hideous course, emancipate Thenceforth their spirits from all earthly fear.

This was their only care: but other thoughts

Were rankling in that elder villain's mind.

Their kinsman Orpas, he of all the crew Who in this fatal visitation fell.

The foulest and the falsest wretch that e'er

Renounced his baptism. From his cherish'd views

Of royalty cut off, he coveted

Count Julian's wide domains, and hopeless now

To gain them through the daughter, laid his toils

Against the father's life, . . the instrument

Of his ambition first, and now design'd Its victim. To this end with cautious hints.

At favouring season ventured, he possess'd

The leader's mind; then, subtly fostering

The doubts himself had sown, with bolder charge

He bade him warily regard the Count, Lest underneath an outward show of faith

The heart uncircumcised were Christian | And danger, when the madden'd multistill:

Else, wherefore had Florinda not obey'd Her dear loved sire's example, and embraced

The saving truth? Else, wherefore was her hand.

Plighted to him so long, so long withheld, Till she had found a fitting hour to fly With that audacious Prince, who now in arms.

Defied the Caliph's power; . . for who could doubt

That in his company she fled, perhaps The mover of his flight? What if the Count

Himself had plann'd the evasion which he feign'd

In sorrow to condemn? What if she went A pledge assured, to tell the mountaineers

That when they met the Musselmen in the heat

Of fight, her father passing to their side Would draw the victory with him? . . Thus he breathed

Fiend-like in Abulcacem's ear schemes

Of murderous malice; and the course of things,

Ere long, in part approving his discourse.

Aided his aim, and gave his wishes weight.

For scarce on the Asturian territory

Had they set foot, when, with the speed of fear.

Count Eudon, nothing doubting that their force

Would like a flood sweep all resistance

Hasten'd to plead his merits; . . he alone.

Found faithful in obedience through reproach

tude

Hurried their chiefs along, and high and low 100

With one infectious frenzy seized, provoked

The invincible in arms. Pelayo led
The raging crew, . . he doubtless the
prime spring

Of all these perilous movements; and 'twas said

He brought the assurance of a strong support,

Count Julian's aid, for in his company From Cordoba, Count Julian's daughter came.

Thus Eudon spake before the assembled chiefs:

When instantly a stern and wrathful voice

Replied, I know Pelayo never made 110 That senseless promise! He who raised the tale

Lies foully; but the bitterest enemy That ever hunted for Pelayo's life

Hath never with the charge of falsehood touch'd

His name.

The Baron had not recognized Till then, beneath the turban's shadowing folds,

Julian's swart visage, where the fiery skies

Of Africa, through many a year's long course.

Had set their hue inburnt. Something he sought

In quick excuse to say of common fame, Lightly believed and busily diffused,

And that no enmity had moved his speech

Repeating rumour's tale. Julian replied, Count Eudon, neither for thyself nor me Excuse is needed here. The path I tread

Is one wherein there can be no return,

No pause, no looking back! A choice like mine

For time and for eternity is made,

Once and for ever! and as easily

The breath of vain report might build again 130

The throne which my just vengeance overthrew,

As in the Caliph and his Captain's mind Affect the opinion of my well-tried truth.

The tidings which thou givest me of my child

Touch me more vitally; bad though they be,

A secret apprehension of aught worse Makes me with joy receive them.

Then the Count

To Abulcacem turn'd his speech, and said.

I pray thee, Chief, give me a messenger By whom I may to this unhappy child Dispatch a father's bidding, such as yet May win her back. What I would say requires

No veil of privacy; before ye all The errand shall be given.

Boldly he spake,

Yet wary in that show of open truth, For well he knew what dangers girt him round

Amid the faithless race. Blind with revenge.

For them in madness had he sacrificed His name, his baptism, and his native land,

To feel, still powerful as he was, that life Hung on their jealous favour. But his heart

Approved him now, where love, too long restrain'd.

Resumed its healing influence, leading him

Right on with no misgiving. Chiefs, he said,

Hear me, and let your wisdom judge between

Me and Prince Orpas! . . Known it is to all,

Too well, what mortal injury provoked My spirit to that vengeance which your aid

So signally hath given. A covenant
We made when first our purpose we
combined, 160

That he should have Florinda for his wife,

Myonlychild, so shouldshebe, Ithought, Revenged and honour'd best. My word was given

Truly, nor did I cease to use all means Of counsel or command, entreating her Sometimes with tears, seeking sometimes with threats

Of an offended father's curse to enforce Obedience; that, she said, the Christian law

Forbade, moreover she had vow'd herself

A servant to the Lord. In vain I strove To win her to the Prophet's saving faith, Using perhaps a rigour to that end Beyond permitted means, and to my heart.

Which loved her dearer than its own life-blood,

Abhorrent. Silently she suffer'd all, Or when I urged her with most vehemence.

Only replied, I knew her fix'd resolve,
And craved my patience but a little
while

Till death should set her free. Touch'd as I was.

I yet persisted, till at length to escape
The ceaseless importunity, she fled: 181
And verily I fear'd until this hour,
My rigour to some fearfuller resolve
Than flight, had driven my child. Chiefs.
I appeal

To each and all, and Orpas to thyself Especially, if, having thus essay'd

All means that law and nature have allow'd

To bend her will, I may not rightfully Hold myself free, that promise being void

Which cannot be fulfill'd.

Thou sayest then, 190
Orpas replied, that from her false belief
Her stubborn opposition drew its force
I should have thought that from the
ways corrupt

Of these idolatrous Christians, little care Might have sufficed to wean a duteous child,

The example of a parent so beloved Leading the way; and yet I will not doubt

Thou didst enforce with all sincerity And holy zeal upon thy daughter's mind The truths of Islam.

Julian knit his brow, 200
And scowling on the insidious renegade
He answered, By what reasoning my
poor mind

Was from the old idolatry reclaim'd, None better knows than Seville's mitred chief,

Who first renouncing errors which he taught,

Led me his follower to the Prophet's pale.

Thy lessons I repeated as I could;

Of graven images, unnatural vows,

False records, fabling creeds, and
juggling priests,

209

Who, making sanctity the cloak of sin.

Laugh'd at the fools on whose credulity
They fatten'd. To these arguments,
whose worth

Prince Orpas, least of all men, should impeach,

I added, like a soldier bred in arms, And to the subtleties of schools unused, The flagrant fact, that Heaven with victory,

Where'er they turn'd, attested and approved

The chosen Prophet's arms. If thou wert still

The mitred Metropolitan, and I

Some wretch of Arian or of Hebrew race, Thy proper business then might be to

pry, 221
And question me for lurking flaws of

And question me for lurking flaws of faith.

We Musselmen, Prince Orpas, live beneath

A wiser law, which with the iniquities Of thine old craft, hath abrogated this Its foulest practice!

As Count Julian ceased, From underneath his black and gather'd

There went a look, which with these wary words

brow

Bore to the heart of that false renegade Their whole envenom'd meaning. Haughtily 230

Withdrawing then his alter'd eyes, he said.

Too much of this! return we to the sum Of my discourse. Let Abulcacem say,

In whom the Caliph speaks, if with all faith

Having essay'd in vain all means to win My child's consent, I may not hold henceforth

The covenant discharged.

The Moor replied.

Well hast thou said, and rightly may'st assure

Thy daughter that the Prophet's holy law

Forbids compulsion. Give thine errand now; 240

The messenger is here.

Then Julian said Go to Pelayo, and from him entreat Admittance to my child, where'ershe be. Say to her, that her father solemnly Annuls the covenant with Orpas

pledged.

Nor with solicitations, nor with threats, Will urge her more, nor from that liberty

Of faith restrain her, which the Prophet's law.

Liberal as Heaven from whence it came, to all

Indulges. Tell her that her father says His days are number'd, and beseeches her 251

By that dear love, which from her infancy

Still he hath borne her, growing as she grew,

Nursed in our weal and strengthen'd in our woe,

She will not in the evening of his life Leave him forsaken and alone. Enough Of sorrow, tell her, have her injuries

Brought on her father's head; let not her act
Thus aggravate the burden. Tell her

Thus aggravate the burden. Tell her too,

That when he pray'd her to return, he

wept 260
Profusely as a child; but bitterer tears
Than ever fell from childhood's eyes

Which traced his hardy cheeks.

were those

With faltering voice He spake, and after he had ceased from speech

His lip was quivering still. The Moorish chief

Then to the messenger his bidding gave. Say, cried he, to these rebel infidels,

Thus Abulcacem in the Caliph's name Exhorteth them: Repent and be forgiven!

Then Julian said, Nor think to stop the dreadful storm of war, 270

Which conquering and to conquer must fulfil

Its destined circle, rolling eastward now Back from the subjugated west, to sweep Thrones and dominions down, till in the

Of unity all nations join, and Earth Acknowledge, as she sees one Sun in heaven.

One God, one Chief, one Prophet, and one Law.

Jerusalem, the holy City, bows

To holier Mecca's creed; the Crescent shines

Triumphant o'er the eternal pyramids; On the cold altars of the worshippers 281 Of Fire moss grows, and reptiles leave their slime:

The African idolatries are fallen.

And Europe's senseless gods of stone and wood

Have had their day. Tell these misguided men.

A moment for repentance yet is left,

And mercy the submitted neck will spare

Before the sword is drawn: but once unsheath'd.

Let Auria witness how that dreadful sword

Accomplisheth its work! They little

The Moors who hope in battle to withstand

Their valour, or in flight escape their

Amid our deserts we hunt down the birds Of heaven, . . wings do not save them ! Nor shall rocks.

And holds, and fastnesses, avail to save These mountaineers. Is not the Earth the Lord's?

And we, his chosen people, whom he sends

To conquer and possess it in his name? Bent in formality of easy prayer

XXI. THE FOUNTAIN IN THE FOREST

THE second eve had closed upon their march

Within the Asturian border, and the Moors

Had pitch'd their tents amid an open

Upon the mountain side. As day grew

Their scatter'd fires shone with distincter

Among the trees, above whose top the

Diffused itself, and stain'd the evening sky.

Ere long the stir of occupation ceased, And all the murmur of the busy host Subsiding died away, as through the

The crier from a knoll proclaim'd the

For prayer appointed, and with sonorous

Thrice in melodious modulation full,

Pronounced the highest name. is no God

But God, he cried; there is no God but God!

Mahommed is the Prophet of the Lord!

Come ye to prayer! to prayer! The Lord is great!

There is no God but God! . . Thus he pronounced

His ritual form, mingling with holiest truth

The audacious name accurs'd. The multitude

Made their ablutions in the mountain stream

Obedient, then their faces to the earth

An arrow's flight above that mountain stream

There was a little glade, where underneath

A long smooth mossy stone a fountain rose.

An oak grew near, and with its ample boughs

O'ercanopied the spring; its fretted roots

Emboss'd the bank, and on their tufted bark

Grew plants which love the moisture and the shade;

Short ferns, and longer leaves of wrinkled green

Which bent toward the spring, and when the wind

Made itself felt, just touch'd with gentle dip

The glassy surface, ruffled ne'er but then,

Save when a bubble rising from the depth Burst, and with faintest circles mark'd its place,

Or if an insect skimm'd it with its wing, Or when in heavier drops the gather'd rain

Fell from the oak's high bower. The mountain roe,

When, having drank there, he would bound across, 40

Drew up upon the bank his meeting feet, And put forth half his force. With silent lapse

From thence through mossy banks the water stole.

Then murmuring hasten'd to the glen below.

Diana might have loved in that sweet spot

To take her noontide rest; and when she stoopt

Hot from the chase to drink, well pleased had seen

Her own bright crescent, and the brighter face

It crown'd, reflected there.

Beside that spring Count Julian's tent was pitch'd upon the glade; 50

There his ablutions Moor-like he perform'd,

And Moor-like knelt in prayer, bowing his head

Upon the mossy bank. There was a sound

Of voices at the tent when he arose,

And lo! with hurried step a woman came Toward him; rightly then his heart presaged,

And ere he could behold her countenance, Florinda knelt, and with uplifted arms Embraced her sire. He raised her from the ground,

Kiss'd her, and clasp'd her to his heart, and said, 60

Thou hast not then forsaken me, my child!

Howe'er the inexorable will of Fate
May in the world which is to come,
divide

Our everlasting destinies, in this

Thou wilt not, O my child, abandon me!
And then with deep and interrupted
voice.

Nor seeking to restrain his copious tears, My blessing be upon thy head, he cried, A father's blessing! Though all faiths were false,

It should not lose its worth! . . She lock'd her hands 70

Around his neck, and gazing in his face Through streaming tears, exclaim'd, Oh never more,

Here or hereafter, never let us part!

And breathing then a prayer in silence forth,

The name of Jesus trembled on her tongue.

Whom hast thou there? cried Julian, And mitigates the griefs he cannot heal. and drew back, I told him I had vow'd to pass my days

Seeing that near them stood a meagre man

In humble garb, who rested with raised hands

On a long staff, bending his head like one

Who when he hears the distant vesperbell, 80

Halts by the way, and, all unseen of men. Offers his homage in the eye of Heaven. She answered, Let not my dear father frown

In anger on his child! Thy messenger Told me that I should be restrain'd no more

From liberty of faith, which the new law Indulged to all; how soon my hour might come

I knew not, and although that hour will bring

Few terrors, yet methinks I would not be

Without a Christian comforter in death.

A Priest! exclaimed the Count, and drawing back, 91

Stoopt for his turban that he might not lack

Some outward symbol of apostacy;

For still in war his wonted arms he wore, Nor for the scymitar had changed the

Nor for the scymitar had changed the sword

Accustomed to his hand. He covered now

His short grey hair, and under the white folds

His swarthy brow, which gather'd as he rose,

Darken'd. Oh frown not thus! Florinda said,

A kind and gentle counsellor is this, 100 One who pours balm into a wounded soul.

And mitigates the griefs he cannot heal. I told him I had vow'd to pass my days A servant of the Lord, yet that my heart,

Hearing the message of thy love, was drawn

With powerful yearnings back. Follow thy heart, . .

It answers to the call of duty here,

He said, nor canst thou better serve the Lord

Than at thy father's side.

Count Julian's brow,
While thus she spake, insensibly relax'd.
A Priest, cried he, and thus with even
hand

Weigh vows and natural duty in the scale?

In what old heresy hath he been train'd?
Or in what wilderness hath he escaped
The domineering Prelate's fire and
sword?

Come hither, man, and tell me who thou art!

A sinner, Roderick, drawing nigh, replied;

Brought to repentance by the grace of God,

And trusting for forgiveness through the blood

Of Christ in humble hope.

A smile of scorn 120 Julian assumed, but merely from the lips

It came; for he was troubled while he gazed

On the strong countenance and thoughtful eye

Before him. A new law hath been proclaim'd,

Said he, which overthrows in its career The Christian altars of idolatry.

What think'st thou of the Prophet?..
Roderick

Made answer, I am in the Moorish camp, And he who asketh is a Musselman.

How then should I reply?.. Safely, rejoin'd 130

The renegade, and freely may'st thou speak

To all that Julian asks. Is not the yoke Of Mecca easy, and its burden light?.. Spain hath not found it so, the Goth replied,

And groaning, turn'd away his countenance.

Count Julian knit his brow, and stood awhile

Regarding him with meditative eye
In silence. Thou art honest too! he
cried;

Why'twas in quest of such a man as this That the old Grecian search'd by lantern

light
In open day the city's crowded streets,
So rare he deem'd the virtue. Honesty
And sense of natural duty in a Priest!
Now for a miracle, ye Saints of Spain!
I shall not pry too closely for the wires,
For, seeing what I see, ye have me now
In the believing mood!

O blessed Saints,

Florinda cried, 'tis from the bitterness, Not from the hardness of the heart, he speaks!

Hear him! and in your goodness give the scoff 150

The virtue of a prayer! So saying, she raised

Her hands in fervent action clasp'd to Heaven:

Then as, still clasp'd, they fell, toward her sire

She turn'd her eyes, beholding him through tears.

The look, the gesture, and that silent woe, Soften'd her father's heart, which in this hour Was open to the influences of love.

Priest, thy vocation were a blessed one,
Said Julian, if its mighty power were
used

To lessen human misery, not to swell 160
The mournful sum, already all-too-great.
If, as thy former counsel should imply,
Thou art not one who would for his
craft's sake

Fret with corrosives and inflame the wound,

Which the poor sufferer brings to thee in trust

That thou with virtuous balm wilt bind it up, . .

If, as I think, thou art not one of those Whose villainy makes honest men turn Moors,

Thou then wilt answer with unbiass'd mind 169

What I shall ask thee, and exorcise thus The sick and feverish conscience of my child,

From inbred phantoms, fiend-like, which possess

Her innocent spirit. Children we are all Of one great Father, in whatever clime Nature or chance hath cast the seeds of life.

All tongues, all colours: neither after death

Shall we be sorted into languages

And tints, . . white, black, and tawny, Greek and Goth,

Northmen and offspring of hot Africa; The All-Father, He in whom we live and move.

He the indifferent Judge of all, regards Nations, and hues, and dialects alike; According to their works shall they be judged,

When even-handed Justice in the scale Their good and evil weighs. All creeds, I ween.

Agree in this, and hold it orthodox.

Roderick, perceiving here that Julian paused,

As if he waited for acknowledgement
Of that plain truth, in motion of assent
Inclined his brow complacently, and
said.

Even so: What follows?.. This, resumed the Count,

That creeds like colours being but accident,

Are therefore in the scale imponderable:..

Thou seest my meaning; . . that from every faith

As every clime, there is a way to Heaven, And thou and I may meet in Paradise.

Oh grant it, God! cried Roderick, fervently,

And smote his breast. Oh grant it, gracious God!

Through the dear blood of Jesus, grant that he

And I may meet before the Mercythrone! 200

That were a triumph of Redeeming Love,

For which admiring Angels would renew Their hallelujahs through the choir of Heaven!

Man! quoth Count Julian, wherefore art thou moved

To this strange passion? I require of thee

Thy judgement, not thy prayers!

Be not displeased!

In gentle voice subdued the Goth replies;

A prayer, from whatsoever lips it flow, By thine own rule should find the way to Heaven.

So that the heart in its sincerity 210 Straight forward breathe it forth. I, like thyself,

Am all untrain'd to subtleties of speech,

Nor competent of this great argument Thou openest; and perhaps shall answer thee

Wide of the words, but to the purport home.

There are to whom the light of gospel truth

Hath never reach'd; of such I needs must deem

As of the sons of men who had their day Before the light was given. But, Count, for those

Who, born amid the light, to darkness turn, 220

Wilful in error, . . I dare only say,

God doth not leave the unhappy soul without

An inward monitor, and till the grave Open, the gate of mercy is not closed.

Priest-like! the renegade replied, and shook

His head in scorn. What is not in the craft

Is error, and for error there shall be No mercy found in Him whom yet ye name

The Merciful!

Now God forbid, rejoin'd The fallen King, that one who stands in need 230

Of mercy for his sins should argue thus Of error! Thou hast said that thou and I.

Thou dying in name a Musselman, and I A servant of the Cross, may meet in Heaven.

Time was when in our fathers' ways we walk'd

Regardlessly alike; faith being to each, . .

For so far thou hast reason'd rightly, . . like

Our country's fashion and our mothertongue, Of mere inheritance,... no thing of choice In judgement fix'd, nor rooted in the heart. 240

Me have the arrows of calamity

Sore stricken; sinking underneath the weight

Of sorrow, yet more heavily oppress'd Beneath the burthen of my sins, I turn'd In that dread hour to Him who from the Cross

Calls to the heavy-laden. There I found Relief and comfort; there I have my hope,

My strength and my salvation; there, the grave

Ready beneath my feet, and Heaven in view.

I to the King of Terrors say, Come, Death, . . 250

Come quickly! Thou too wert a stricken deer,

Julian,.. God pardon the unhappy hand That wounded thee!.. but whither didst thou go

For healing? Thou hast turn'd away from Him.

Who saith, Forgive as ye would be forgiven;

And that the Moorish sword might do thy work.

Received the creed of Mecca: with what fruit

For Spain, let tell her cities sack'd, her sons

Slaughter'd, her daughters than thine own dear child

More foully wrong'd, more wretched!

For thyself, 260

Thou hast had thy fill of vengeance, and perhaps

The cup was sweet: but it hath left behind

A bitter relish! Gladly would thy soul Forget the past; as little canst thou bear To send into futurity thy thoughts:

And for this Now, what is it, Count, but fear . .

However bravely thou may'st bear thy front...

Danger, remorse, and stinging obloquy? One only hope, one only remedy,

One only refuge yet remains. . . My life Is at thy mercy, Count 1 Call, if thou wilt,

Thy men, and to the Moors deliver me!
Or strike thyself! Death were from any
hand

A welcome gift; from thine, and in this cause,

A boon indeed! My latest words on earth

Should tell thee that all sins may be effaced,

Bid thee repent, have faith, and be forgiven!

Strike, Julian, if thou wilt, and send my soul

To intercede for thine, that we may meet, Thou and thy child and I, beyond the grave. 280

Thus Roderick spake, and spread his arms as if

He offer'd to the sword his willing breast, With looks of passionate persuasion fix'd Upon the Count, who in his first access Of anger, seem'd as though he would have call'd

His guards to seize the Priest. The attitude

Disarm'd him, and that fervent zeal sincere,

And more than both, the look and voice, which like

A mystery troubled him. Florinda too Hung on his arm with both her hands, and cried, 290

O father, wrong him not! he speaks from God!

Life and salvation are upon his tongue!

Judge thou the value of that faith
whereby.

Reflecting on the past, I murmur not, And to the end of all look on with joy Of hope assured!

Peace, innocent! replied The Count, and from her hold withdrew his arm.

Then with a gather'd brow of mournfulness

Rather than wrath, regarding Roderick, said,

Thou preachest that all sins may be effaced: 300

Is there forgiveness, Christian, in thy creed

For Roderick's crime?.. For Roderick and for thee,

Count Julian, said the Goth, and as he spake

Trembled through every fibre of his frame,

The gate of Heaven is open. Julian threw

His wrathful hand aloft, and cried, Away!

Earth could not hold us both, nor can one Heaven

Contain my deadliest enemy and me!

My father, say not thus! Florinda cried;

I have forgiven him! I have pray'd for him! 310

For him, for thee, and for myself I pour One constant prayer to Heaven! In passion then

She knelt, and bending back, with arms and face

Raised toward the sky, the supplicant exclaim'd,

Redeemer, heal his heart! It is the grief Which festers there that hath bewilder'd him!

Save him, Redeemer! by thy precious death

Save, save him, O my God! Then on her face

She fell, and thus with bitterness pursued

In silent throes her agonizing prayer. 320

Afflict not thus thyself, my child, the Count

Exclaim'd; O dearest, be thou comforted;

Set but thy heart at rest, I ask no more! Peace, dearest, peace!.. and weeping as he spake,

He knelt to raise her. Roderick also knelt;

Be comforted, he cried, and rest in faith That God will hear thy prayers! they must be heard.

He who could doubt the worth of prayers like thine

May doubt of all things! Sainted as thou art 329

In sufferings here, this miracle will be Thy work and thy reward!

Then raising her, They seated her upon the fountain's

And there beside her sate. The moon had risen.

And that fair spring lay blacken'd half in shade,

Half like a burnish'd mirror in her light. By that reflected light Count Julian saw That Roderick's face was bathed with tears, and pale

As monumental marble. Friend, said he, Whether thy faith be fabulous, or sent Indeed from Heaven, its dearest gift to man, 340

Thy heart is true: and had the mitred Priest

Of Seville been like thee, or hadst thou held

314

The place he fill'd; . . but this is idle talk. . .

Things are as they will be; and we, poor slaves.

Fret in the harness as we may, must

The Car of Destiny where'er she drives, Inexorable and blind!

Oh wretched man!
Cried Roderick, if thou seekest to assuage
Thy wounded spirit with that deadly
drug,

Hell's subtlest venom; look to thine own heart, 350

Where thou hast Will and Conscience to belie

This juggling sophistry, and lead thee yet

Through penitence to Heaven!

Whate'er it be

That governs us, in mournful tone the Count

Replied, Fate, Providence, or Allah's will, Or reckless Fortune, still the effect the same.

A world of evil and of misery!

Look where we will we meet it; wheresoe'er

We go we bear it with us. Here we sit Upon the margin of this peaceful spring, And oh! what volumes of calamity 361 Would be unfolded here, if either heart Laid open its sad records! Tell me not Of goodness! Either in some freak of power

This frame of things was fashion'd, then cast off

To take its own wild course, the sport of chance;

Or the bad Spirit o'er the Good prevails, And in the eternal conflict hath arisen Lord of the ascendant!

Rightly would'st thou say
Were there no world but this! the Goth
replied. 370

The happiest child of earth that e'er was mark'd

To be the minion of prosperity,

Richest in corporal gifts and wealth of mind,

Honour and fame attending him abroad, Peace and all dear domestic joys at home.

And sunshine till the evening of his days Closed in without a cloud, . . even such a man

Would from the gloom and horror of his heart

Confirm thy fatal thought, were this world all!

Oh! who could bear the haunting mystery, 380

If death and retribution did not solve The riddle, and to heavenliest harmony Reduce the seeming chaos!.. Here we

The water at its well-head; clear it is, Not more transpicuous the invisible air; Pure as an infant's thoughts; and here

And good directed all its uses serve.

to life

The herb grows greener on its brink;

Bend o'er the stream that feeds their freshened roots;

The red-breast loves it for his wintry haunts;

390

And when the buds begin to open forth, Builds near it with his mate their brooding nest;

The thirsty stag with widening nostrils there

Invigorated draws his copious draught;
And there amid its flags the wild-boar stands,

Nor suffering wrong nor meditating hurt. Through woodlands wild and solitary fields

Unsullied thus it holds its bounteous course;

But when it reaches the resorts of men. The service of the city there defiles 400 The tainted stream; corrupt and foul it flows

Through loathsome banks and o'er a bed impure,

Till in the sea, the appointed end to which

Through all its way it hastens, 'tis received.

And, losing all pollution, mingles there In the wide world of waters. So is it With the great stream of things, if all were seen;

Good the beginning, good the end shall

And transitory evil only make The good end happier. Ages pass away, Thrones fall, and nations disappear, and worlds

Grow old and go to wreck; the soul

Endures, and what she chuseth for herself.

The arbiter of her own destiny, That only shall be permanent.

But guilt,

And all our suffering? said the Count. The Goth

Replied, Repentance taketh sin away, Death remedies the rest. . . Soothed by the strain

Of such discourse, Julian was silent then, And sate contemplating. Florinda too Was calm'd: If sore experience may be thought

To teach the uses of adversity,

She said, alas! who better learn'd than I In that sad school! Methinks if ye would know

How visitations of calamity

Affect the pious soul, 'tis shown ve there!

the sky

Sailing alone, doth cross in her career The rolling Moon! I watch'd it as it

And deem'd the deep opake would blot her beams;

But, melting like a wreath of snow, it hangs

In folds of wavy silver round, and clothes

The orb with richer beauties than her

Then passing, leaves her in her light serene.

Thus having said, the pious sufferer

Beholding with fix'd eyes that lovely

Till quiet tears confused in dizzy light The broken moonbeams. They too by the toil

Of spirit, as by travail of the day

Subdued, were silent, yielding to the hour.

The silver cloud diffusing slowly pass'd, And now into its airy elements

Resolved is gone; while through the azure depth

Alone in heaven the glorious Moon pur-

Her course appointed, with indifferent beams

Shining upon the silent hills around,

And the dark tents of that unholy host, Who, all unconscious of impending fate, Take their last slumber there. The camp is still;

The fires have moulder'd, and the breeze which stirs

The soft and snowy embers, just lays bare

At times a red and evanescent light,

Or for a moment wakes a feeble flame.

Look yonder at that cloud, which through | They by the fountain hear the stream below,

Whose murmurs, as the wind arose or fell.

Fuller or fainter reach the ear attuned. And now the nightingale, not distant far, Began her solitary song; and pour'd To the cold moon a richer, stronger strain

Than that with which the lyric lark salutes 460

The new-born day. Her deep and thrilling song

Seem'd with its piercing melody to reach The soul, and in mysterious unison

Blend with all thoughts of gentleness and love.

Their hearts were open to the healing power

Of nature; and the splendour of the

The flow of waters, and that sweetest lay Came to them like a copious evening

Falling on vernal herbs which thirst for rain.

XXII. THE MOORISH COUNCIL

Thus they beside the fountain sate, of food

And rest forgetful, when a messenger Summon'd Count Julian to the Leader's tent.

In council there at that late hour he

The assembled Chiefs, on sudden tidings call'd

Of unexpected weight from Cordoba. Jealous that Abdalaziz had assumed A regal state, affecting in his court The forms of Gothic sovereignty, the Moors.

Whom artful spirits of ambitious mould Stirr'd up, had risen against him in Equally unreasoning, they destroy'd: revolt: H

And he who late had in the Caliph's name

Ruled from the Ocean to the Pyrenees, A mutilate and headless carcass now, From pitying hands received beside the

A hasty grave, scarce hidden there from dogs

And ravens, nor from wintry rains secure.

She, too, who in the wreck of Spain preserved

Her queenly rank, the wife of Roderick first.

Of Abdalaziz after, and to both Alike unhappy, shared the ruin now Her counsels had brought on; for she had led

The infatuate Moor, in dangerous vaunterv.

To these aspiring forms, . . so should he

Respect and honour from the Musselmen, She said, and that the obedience of the

Follow'd the sceptre. In an evil hour She gave the counsel, and in evil hour He lent a willing ear; the popular rage Fell on them both; and they to whom her name

Had been a mark for mockery and reproach,

Shudder'd with human horror at her fate.

Ayub was heading the wild anarchy; But where the cement of authority Is wanting, all things there are dislocate: The mutinous soldiery, by every cry Of rumour set in wild career, were driven

By every gust of passion, setting up One hour, what in the impulse of the next.

thus all

Was in misrule where uproar gave the law,

And ere from far Damascus they could learn

The Caliph's pleasure, many a moon must pass.

What should be done? should Abulcacem march

To Cordoba, and in the Caliph's name Assume the power which to his rank in arms

Rightly devolved, restoring thus the reign

Of order? or pursue with quicken'd speed The end of this great armament, and crush

Rebellion first, then to domestic ills 50 Apply his undivided mind and force Victorious? What in this emergency Was Julian's counsel, Abulcacem ask'd. Should they accomplish soon their enterprize?

Or would the insurgent infidels prolong The contest, seeking by protracted war To weary them, and trusting in the strength

Of these wild hills?

Julian replied, The Chief

Of this revolt is wary, resolute,

Of approved worth in war: a desperate part 60

He for himself deliberately hath chosen, Confiding in the hereditary love

Borne to him by these hardy mountaineers.

A love which his own noble qualities Have strengthen'd so that every heart is his.

When ye can bring them to the open proof

Of battle, ye will find them in his cause Lavish of life; but well they know the strength

Of their own fastnesses, the mountain paths

Impervious to pursuit, the vantages 70 Of rock, and pass, and woodland, and ravine:

And hardly will ye tempt them to forego These natural aids wherein they put their trust

As in their stubborn spirit, each alike Deem'd by themselves invincible, and so By Roman found and Goth . . beneath whose sway

Slowly persuaded rather than subdued They came, and still through every change retain'd

Their manners obstinate and barbarous speech.

My counsel, therefore, is, that we secure With strong increase of force the adjacent posts, 81

And chiefly Gegio, leaving them so mann'd

As may abate the hope of enterprize Their strength being told. Time in a strife like this

Becomes the ally of those who trust in him:

Make then with Time your covenant.
Old fends

May disunite the chiefs: some may be gain'd

By fair entreaty, others by the stroke Of nature, or of policy, cut off.

This was the counsel which in Cordoba I offer'd Abdalaziz: in ill hour 91 Rejecting it, he sent upon this war

His father's faithful friend! Dark are the ways

Of destiny! had I been at his side
Old Muza would not now have mourn'd
his age

Left childless, nor had Ayub dared defy The Caliph's represented power. The case

Calls for thine instant presence, with the weight

Of thy legitimate authority.

Julian, said Orpas, turning from beneath 100

His turban to the Count a crafty eye,
Thy daughter is return'd; doth she not
bring

Some tidings of the movements of the

The Count replied, When child and parent meet

First reconciled from discontents which wrung

The hearts of both, ill should their converse be

Of warlike matters! There hath been no time

For such inquiries, neither should I think
To ask her touching that for which
I know

She hath neither eye nor thought.

There was a time, Orpas with smile malignant thus replied, When in the progress of the Caliph's arms

Count Julian's daughter had an interest Which touch'd her nearly! But her turn is served.

And hatred of Prince Orpas may beget Indifference to the cause. Yet Destiny Still guideth to the service of the faith The wayward heart of woman; for as one

Delivered Roderick to the avenging sword.

So hath another at this hour betray'd Pelayo to his fall. His sister came 121 At nightfall to my tent a fugitive.

She tells me that on learning our approach

The rebel to a cavern in the hills
Had sent his wife and children, and with
them

Those of his followers, thinking there conceal'd

They might be safe. She, moved, by injuries

Which stung her spirit, on the way escaped,

And for revenge will guide us. In reward

She asks her brother's forfeiture of lands
In marriage with Numacian: something too

Touching his life, that for her services It might be spared, she said;.. an afterthought

To salve decorum, and if conscience wake Serve as a sop: but when the sword shall smite

Pelayo and his dangerous race, I ween That a thin kerchief will dry all the tears The Lady Guisla sheds!

'Tis the old taint!

Said Julian mournfully; from her mother's womb

She brought the inbred wickedness which now

In ripe infection blossoms. Woman, woman,

Still to the Goths art thou the instrument

Of overthrow; thy virtue and thy vice Fatal alike to them!

Say rather, cried The insidious renegade, that Allah thus By woman punisheth the idolatry

Of those who raise a woman to the rank Of godhead, calling on their Mary's name With senseless prayers. In vain shall they invoke

Her trusted succour now! like silly birds

By fear betray'd, they fly into the toils; And this Pelayo, who in lengthen'd war Baffling our force, has thought perhaps to reign

Prince of the Mountains, when we hold his wife

And offspring at our mercy, must himself

Come to the lure.

Enough, the Leader said; This unexpected work of favouring Fate Opens an easy way to our desires,

And renders farther counsel needless now.

Great is the Prophet whose protecting power 160

Goes with the faithful forth! the rebels' days

Are number'd; Allah hath deliver'd them

Into our hands!

So saying he arose;

The Chiefs withdrew, Orpas alone remain'd

Obedient to his indicated will.

The event, said Abulcacem, hath approved

Thy judgement in all points; his daughter comes

At the first summons, even as thou saidst;

Her errand with the insurgents done, she brings

Their well-concerted project back, a safe

And unexpected messenger; . . the Moor, . .

The shallow Moor, . . must see and not perceive:

Must hear and understand not; yea must bear,

Poor easy fool, to serve their after mirth, A part in his own undoing! But just Heaven

With this unlook'd-for incident hath marr'd

Their complots, and the sword shall cut this web

Of treason.

Well, the renegade replied, Thou knowest Count Julian's spirit, quick in wiles,

In act audacious. Baffled now, he thinks

Either by instant warning to apprize
The rebels of their danger, or preserve
The hostages when fallen into our power,
Till secret craft contrive, or open force
Win their enlargement. Haply too he
dreams

Of Cordoba, the avenger and the friend Of Abdalaziz, in that cause to arm

Moor against Moor, preparing for himself

The victory o'er the enfeebled conquerors.

Success in treason hath embolden'd him, And power but serves him for fresh treachery, false

To Roderick first, and to the Caliph now.

The guilt, said Abulcacem, is confirm'd,

The sentence pass'd; all that is now required

Is to strike sure and safely. He hath with him

A veteran force devoted to his will,

Whom to provoke were perilous; nor less

Of peril lies there in delay: what course Between these equal dangers should we steer?

They have been train'd beneath him in the wars 200

Of Africa, the renegade replied;

Men are they who, from their youth up, have found

Their occupation and their joy in arms; Indifferent to the cause for which they fight,

But faithful to their leader, who hath won

By licence largely given, yet temper'd still

With exercise of firm authority,

Their whole devotion. Vainly should we seek

By proof of Julian's guilt to pacify Such martial spirits, unto whom all creeds

And countries are alike; but take away
The head, and forthwith their fidelity
Goes at the market price. The act must
be

Sudden and secret; poison is too slow. Thus it may best be done; the Mountaineers.

Doubtless, ere long will rouse us with some spur

Of sudden enterprize: at such a time A trusty minister approaching him May smite him, so that all shall think the spear

Comes from the hostile troops.

Right counsellor!
Cried Abulcacem, thou shalt have his
lands.

lands,
The proper meed of thy fidelity:

His daughter thou may'st take or leave. Go now

And find a faithful instrument to put Our purpose in effect!.. And when 'tis done,

The Moor, as Orpas from the tent withdrew,

Muttering pursued, . . look for a like reward

Thyself! that restless head of wickedness

In the grave will brood no treasons.
Other babes

Scream when the Devil, as they spring to life, 230

Infects them with his touch; but thou didst stretch

Thine arms to meet him, and like mother's milk

Suck the congenial evil! Thou hast tried

Both laws, and were there aught to gain, would st prove

A third as readily; but when thy sins

Are weigh'd, 'twill be against an empty scale,

And neither Prophet will avail thee then!

XXIII. THE VALE OF COVADONGA

THE camp is stirring, and ere day hath dawn'd

The tents are struck. Early they rise whom hope

Awakens, and they travel fast with whom

She goes companion of the way. By noon

Hath Abulcacem in his speed attain'd The vale of Cangas. Well the trusty scouts

Observe his march, and fleet as mountain roes,

From post to post with instantaneous speed

The warning bear: none else is nigh; the vale

Hath been deserted, and Pelayo's hall so Is open to the foe, who on the tower Hoist their white signal-flag. In Sella's

The misbelieving multitudes perform, With hot and hasty hand, their noontide rite.

stream

Then hurryingly repeat the Impostor's prayer.

Here they divide; the Chieftain halts with half

The host, retaining Julian and his men, Whom where the valley widen'd he disposed,

Liable to first attack, that so the deed Of murder plann'd with Orpas might be done.

The other force the Moor Alcahman led Whom Guisla guided up Pionia's stream Eastward to Soto. Ibrahim went with him.

Proud of Granada's snowy heights subdued,

And boasting of his skill in mountain war:

Yet sure he deem'd an easier victory

Awaited him this day. Little, quoth
he.

Weens the vain Mountaineer who puts his trust

In dens and rocky fastnesses, how close Destruction is at hand! Belike he thinks 30

The Humma's happy wings have shadow'd him.

And therefore Fate with royalty must crown

His chosen head! Pity the seymitar With its rude edge so soon should interrupt

The pleasant dream!

There can be no escape For those who in the cave seek shelter, cried

Alcahman; yield they must, or from their holes

Like bees we smoke them out. The Chief perhaps

May reign awhile King of the wolves and bears,

Till his own subjects hunt him down, or kites 40

And crows divide what hunger may have left

Upon his ghastly limbs. Happier for him

That destiny should this day to our hands

Deliver him; short would be his sufferings then;

And we right joyfully should in one hour Behold our work accomplish'd, and his race

Extinct.

Thus these in mockery and in thoughts

Of bloody triumph, to the future blind, Indulged the scornful vein; nor deem'd that they

Whom to the sword's unsparing edge they doom'd, 50

Even then in joyful expectation pray'd To Heaven for their approach, and at their post

Prepared, were trembling with excess of hope.

Here in these mountain straits the Mountaineer

Had felt his country's strength insuperable;

Here he had pray'd to see the Musselman With all his myriads; therefore had he look'd

To Covadonga as a sanctuary

Apt for concealment, easy of defence; And Guisla's flight, though to his heart it sent 60

A pang more poignant for their mother's sake,

Yet did it further in its consequence His hope and project, surer than decoy Well-laid, or best-concerted stratagem. That sullen and revengeful mind, he

knew,
Would follow to the extremity of guilt

Its long fore-purposed shame: the toils were laid,

And she who by the Musselmen full sure

And she who by the Musselmen full sure Thought on her kindred her revenge to wreak,

Led the Moors in.

Count Pedro and his son
Were hovering with the main Asturian
force 72

In the wider vale to watch occasion there,

And with hot onset when the alarm began

Pursue the vantage. In the fated straits

Of Deva had the King disposed the rest: Amid the hanging woods, and on the cliffs,

A long mile's length on either side its bed, They lay. The lever and the axe and saw

Had skilfully been plied; and trees and stones,

A dread artillery, ranged on crag and shelf 80

And steep descent, were ready at the word

Precipitate to roll resistless down.

The faithful maiden not more wistfully Looks for the day that brings her lover home: . .

Scarce more impatiently the horse en-

The rein, when loud and shrill the hunter's horn

Rings in his joyous ears, than at their post

The Mountaineers await their certain prey;

Yet mindful of their Prince's order, oft And solemnly enforced, with eagerness Subdued by minds well-master'd, they expect 91

The appointed signal.

Hand must not be raised,

Foot stirr'd, nor voice be utter'd, said the Chief,

Till the word pass: impatience would mar all.

God hath deliver'd over to your hands His enemies and ours, so we but use

The occasion wisely. Not till the word pass

From man to man transmitted, 'In the name

Of God, for Spain and Vengeance!' let a hand

Be lifted; on obedience all depends, 100
Their march below with noise of horse
and foot

And haply with the clang of instruments, Might drown all other signal, this is sure:

But wait it calmly; it will not be given Till the whole line hath enter'd in the toils.

Comrades, be patient, so shall none escape

Who once set foot within these straits of death.

Thus had Pelayo on the Mountaineers
With frequent and impressive charge
enforced

The needful exhortation. This alone He doubted, that the Musselmen might see

The perils of the vale, and warily Forbear to enter. But they thought to

As Guisla told, the main Asturian force Seeking concealment there, no other aid Soliciting from these their native hills; And that the babes and women having fallen

In thraldom, they would lay their weapons down,

And supplicate forgiveness for their sake.

Nor did the Moors perceive in what a strait 120

They enter'd; for the morn had risen o'ercast,

And when the Sun had reach'd the height of heaven,

Dimly his pale and beamless orb was seen

Moving through mist. A soft and gentle rain,

Scarce heavier than the summer's evening dew,

Descended, . . through so still an atmosphere,

That every leaf upon the moveless trees Was studded o'er with rain-drops, bright and full, o'erawoln 120

The motion came.

Low on the mountain side The fleecy vapour hung, and in its veil With all their dreadful preparations wrapt

The Mountaineers: .. in breathless hope they lav.

Some blessing God in silence for the power

This day vouchsafed; others with fervency

Of prayer and vow invoked the Mother-Maid.

Beseeching her that in this favouring

She would be strongly with them. From

Meantime distinct they heard the passing tramp

Of horse and foot, continuous as the sound

Of Deva's stream, and barbarous tongues commixt

With laughter, and with frequent shouts, . . for all

Exultant came, expecting sure success; Blind wretches over whom the ruin hung!

They say, quoth one, that though the Prophet's soul

Doth with the black-eyed Houris bathe in bliss.

Life hath not left his body, which bears

By its miraculous power the holy tomb, And holds it at Medina in the air

Buoyant between the temple's floor and roof:

And there the Angels fly to him with news

From East, West, North, and South, of Awaits thee at this hour? . . Little what befalls

None falling till from its own weight His faithful people. If when he shall hear

> The tale of this day's work, he should for joy

Forget that he is dead, and walk abroad. . .

It were as good a miracle as when

He sliced the moon! Sir Angel hear me now.

Whoe'er thou be'st who are about to speed

From Spain to Araby! when thou hast

The Prophet's ear, be sure thou tellest

How bravely Ghauleb did his part to-

And with what special reverence he

Desired thee to commend him to his grace!..

Fie on thee, scoffer that thou art! replied

His comrade: thou wilt never leave these gibes

Till some commission'd arrow through the teeth

Shall nail the offending tongue. thou not heard

How when our clay is leaven'd first with

The ministering Angel brings it from that spot

Whereon 'tis written in the eternal book That soul and body must their parting take.

And earth to earth return? How knowest thou

But that the Spirit who compounded thee.

To distant Syria from this very vale Bore thy component dust, and Azrael here

thought he

Who spake, that in that valley at that hour

One death awaited both!

Thus they pursued

Toward the cave their inauspicious

Weak childhood there and ineffective age

In the chambers of the rock were placed secure:

But of the women, all whom with the babes

Maternal care detain'd not, were aloft To aid in the destruction: by the side Of fathers, brethren, husbands, station'd there.

They watch and pray. Pelayo in the cave

With the venerable Primate took his

Ranged on the rising cliffs on either hand.

Vigilant sentinels with eve intent

Observe his movements, when to take the word

And pass it forward. He in arms complete

Stands in the portal: a stern majesty Reign'd in his countenance severe that hour.

And in his eye a deep and dreadful joy Shone, as advancing up the vale he 8aW

The Moorish banners. God hath blinded them!

He said: the measure of their crimes is full!

O Vale of Deva, famous shalt thou be From this day forth for ever; and to these

Thy springs shall unborn generations

In pilgrimage, and hallow with their pravers

The cradle of their native monarchy!

There was a stirring in the air, the sun Prevail'd, and gradually the brightening mist

Began to rise and melt. A jutting crag

Upon the right projected o'er the stream.

Not farther from the cave than a strong

Expert, with deadly aim, might cast the spear.

Or a strong voice, pitch'd to full compass, make

Its clear articulation heard distinct. 210 A venturous dalesman, once ascending there

To rob the eagle's nest, had fallen, and hung

Among the heather, wondrously preserved:

Therefore had he with pious gratitude Placed on that overhanging brow a Cross.

Tall as the mast of some light fisher's skiff.

And from the vale conspicuous. As the Moors

Advanced, the Chieftain in the van was

Known by his arms, and from the crag a voice

Pronounced his name, . . Alcahman! hoa, look up,

Alcahman! As the floating mist drew

It had divided there, and open'd round The Cross; part clinging to the rock beneath.

Hovering and waving part in fleecy folds.

A canopy of silver light condensed

To shape and substance. In the midst there stood

A female form, one hand upon the Cross.

The other raised in menacing act; below Loose flow'd her raiment, but her breast was arm'd,

And helmeted her head. The Moor turn'd pale, 230

For on the walls of Auria he had seen That well-known figure, and had well believed

She rested with the dead. What, hoa! she cried,

Alcahman! In the name of all who fell At Auria in the massacre, this hour

I summon thee before the throne of God

To answer for the innocent blood! This hour,

Moor, Miscreant, Murderer, Child of Hell, this hour

I summon thee to judgement!.. In the name

Of God! for Spain and Vengeance!
Thus she closed

Her speech; for taking from the Primate's hand 241

That oaken cross which at the sacring rites

Had served for crosier, at the cavern's mouth

Pelayo lifted it and gave the word.

From voice to voice on either side it pass'd

With rapid repetition, . . In the name Of God! for Spain and Vengeance! and forthwith

On either side along the whole defile The Asturians shouting in the name of God.

Set the whole ruin loose! huge trunks and stones, 250

And loosen'd crags, down down they roll'd with rush

And bound, and thundering force. Such was the fall

As when some city by the labouring

Heaved from its strong foundations is cast down,

And all its dwellings, towers, and palaces,

In one wide desolation prostrated.

From end to end of that long strait, the crash

Was heard continuous, and commixt with sounds

More dreadful, shrieks of horror and despair,

And death, . . the wild and agonizing cry 260

Of that whole host in one destruction whelm'd.

Vain was all valour there, all martial skill;

The valiant arm is helpless now; the feet

Swift in the race avail not now to save; They perish, all their thousands perish there, . .

Horsemen and infantry they perish all...

The outward armour and the bones within

Broken and bruised and crush'd. Echo prolong'd

The long uproar: a silence then ensued,
Through which the sound of Deva's
stream was heard,
270

A lonely voice of waters, wild and sweet;

The lingering groan, the faintly-utter'd prayer,

The louder curses of despairing death, Ascended not so high. Down from the

scended not so high. Down from

Pelayo hastes, the Asturians hasten down,

Fierce and immitigable down they speed

On all sides, and along the vale of blood The avenging sword did mercy's work that hour.

XXIV. RODERICK AND COUNT JULIAN

Thou hast been busy, Death! this day, and vet

But half thy work is done; the Gates of Hell

Are throng'd, vet twice ten thousand spirits more.

Who from their warm and healthful tenements

Fear no divorce, must ere the sun go down

Enter the world of woe! the Gate of Heaven

Is open too, and Angels round the throne Of Mercy on their golden harps this day Shall sing the triumphs of Redeeming Love.

There was a Church at Cangas dedicate

To that Apostle unto whom his Lord Had given the keys; a humble edifice, Whose rude and time-worn structure suited well

That vale among the mountains. Its low roof

With stone plants and with moss was overgrown,

Short fern, and richer weeds which from the eaves

Hung their long tresses down. White lichens clothed

The sides, save where the ivy spread, which bower'd

The porch, and clustering round the pointed wall,

Wherein two bells, each open to the

Hung side by side, threaded with hairy shoots

The double nich; and climbing to the In the distant vale a rising dust was cross.

Wreathed it and half conceal'd its sacred form

With bushy tufts luxuriant. Here in the font...

Borne hither with rejoicing and with pravers

Of all the happy land who saw in him

The lineage of their ancient Chiefs renew'd...

The Prince had been immersed: and here within

An oaken galilee, now black with age, His old Iberian ancestors were laid. 30

Two stately oaks stood nigh, in the full growth

Of many a century. They had flourish'd there

Before the Gothic sword was felt in Spain,

And when the ancient sceptre of the Goths

Was broken, there they flourish'd still. Their boughs

Mingled on high, and stretching wide around.

Form'd a deep shade, beneath which canopy

Upon the ground Count Julian's board was spread,

For to his daughter he had left his tent Pitch'd for her use hard by. He at the board

Sate with his trusted Captains, Gunderick.

Felix and Miro, Theudered and Paul. Basil and Cottila, and Virimar.

Men through all fortunes faithful to their Lord.

And to that old and tried fidelity.

By personal love and honour held in ties Strong as religious bonds. As there they sate,

seen,

And frequent flash of steel, . . the flying fight

Of men who, by a fiery foe pursued, 50 Put forth their coursers at full speed, to reach

The aid in which they trust. Up sprung the Chiefs.

And hastily taking helm and shield, and spear,

Sped to their post.

Amid the chesnut groves

On Sella's side, Alphonso had in charge To watch the foe; a prowling band came nigh,

Whom with the ardour of impetuous youth

He charged and followed them in close pursuit:

Quick succours join'd them; and the strife grew hot, 59

Ere Pedro hastening to bring off his son, Or Julian and his Captains, . . bent alike That hour to abstain from combat, (for by this

Full sure they deem'd Alcahman had secured

The easy means of certain victory,)...
Could reach the spot. Both thus in their intent

According, somewhat had they now allay'd

The fury of the fight, though still spears flew.

And strokes of sword and mace were interchanged,

When passing through the troop a Moor came up

On errand from the Chief, to Julian sent:

A fatal errand fatally perform'd

For Julian, for the Chief, and for himself, And all that host of Musselmen he brought;

For while with well-dissembled words he lured

The warrior's ear, the dexterous ruffian mark'd

The favouring moment and unguarded place,

And plunged a javelin in his side. The Count

Fell, but in falling called to Cottila,

Treachery! the Moor! the Moor! . . He too on whom

He call'd had seen the blow from whence it came, 80

And seized the murderer. Miscreant! he exclaim'd,

Who set thee on? The Musselman, who saw

His secret purpose baffled, undismayed, Replies, What I have done is authorized; To punish treachery and prevent worse ill

Orpas and Abulcacem sent me here; The service of the Caliph and the Faith Required the blow.

The Prophet and the Fiend Reward thee then! cried Cottila; meantime

Take thou from me thy proper earthly meed; 90

Villain! . . and lifting as he spake the sword,

He smote him on the neck: the trenchant blade

Through vein and artery pass'd and yielding bone;

And on the shoulder, as the assassin dropt,

His head half-severed fell. The curse of God

Fall on the Caliphand the Faith and thee; Stamping for anguish, Cottila pursued! African dogs, thus is it ye requite

Our services?.. But dearly shall ye pay For this day's work!.. O Fellowsoldiers, here,

Stretching his hands toward the host, he cried,

Behold your noble leader basely slain! He who for twenty years hath led us forth

To war, and brought us home with victory,

Here he lies foully murdered, . . by the Moors, . .

Those whom he trusted, whom he served so well!

Our turn is next! but neither will we wait

Idly, nor tamely fall!

Amid the grief,

Tumult, and rage, of those who gather'd round,

When Julian could be heard, I have yet life,

He said, for vengeance. Virimar, speed thou

To yonder Mountaineers, and tell their Chiefs

That Julian's veteran army joins this day

Pelayo's standard! The command devolves

On Gunderick. Fellow-soldiers, who so well

Redress'd the wrongs of your old General,

Ye will not let this death go unrevenged!..

Tears then were seen on many an iron cheek.

And groans were heard from many a resolute heart.

And vows with imprecations mix'd went forth, 120

And curses check'd by sobs. Bear me apart,

Said Julian, with a faint and painful voice,

And let me see my daughter ere I die.

Scarce had he spoken when the pitying throng

Divide before her. Eagerly she came;

A deep and fearful lustre in her eye,

A look of settled woe, . . pale, deadly pale,

Yet to no lamentations giving way,

Nor tears nor groans; . . within her breaking heart

She bore the grief, and kneeling solemnly 130

Beside him, raised her aweful hands to heaven,

And cried, Lord God! be with him in this hour!

Two things have I to think of, O my child,

Vengeance and thee; said Julian. For the first

I have provided: what remains of life As best may comfort thee may so be best Employ'd; let me be borne within the church.

And thou, with that good man who follows thee,

Attend me there.

Thus when Florinda heard Her father speak, a gleam of heavenly joy 140

Shone through the anguish of her countenance.

O gracious God, she cried, my prayers are heard;

Now let me die!.. They raised him from the earth;

He, knitting as they lifted him his brow, Drew in through open lips and teeth firm-closed

His painful breath, and on the lance laid hand,

Lest its long shaft should shake the mortal wound.

Gently his men with slow and steady step Their suffering burthen bore, and in the Church

Before the altar laid him down, his head Upon Florinda's knees. . . Now, friends, said he, Farewell. I ever hoped to meet my death

Among ye, like a soldier, . . but not thus!

Go, join the Asturians; and in after years.

When of your old commander ye shall talk,

How well he loved his followers, what he was

In battle, and how basely he was slain, Let not the tale its fit completion lack, But say how bravely was his death revenged.

Vengeance! in that good word doth Julian make 160

His testament; your faithful swords must give

The will its full performance. Leave me now,

I have done with worldly things. Comrades, farewell,

And love my memory!

They with copious tears
Of burning anger, grief exasperating
Their rage, and fury giving force to grief,
Hasten'd to form their ranks against the
Moors.

Julian meantime toward the altar turn'd His languid eyes: That Image, is it not St. Peter, he inquired, he who denied

His Lord and was forgiven?.. Roderick rejoin'd,

It is the Apostle; and may that same Lord,

O Julian, to thy soul's salvation bless The seasonable thought!

The dying Count Then fix'd upon the Goth his earnest

No time, said he, is this for bravery, As little for dissemblance. I would fain Die in the faith wherein my fathers died, Whereto they pledged me in mine infancy...

A soldier's habits, he pursued, have steel'd 180

My spirit, and perhaps I do not fear This passage as I ought. But if to feel

That I have sinn'd, and from my soul renounce

The Impostor's faith, which never in that soul

Obtain'd a place, . . if at the Saviour's feet,

Laden with guilt, to cast myself and cry, Lord, I believe! help thou my unbelief!..

If this in the sincerity of death

Sufficeth, . . Father, let me from thy lips Receive the assurances with which the Church

Doth bless the dying Christian.

Roderick raised His eyes to Heaven, and crossing on his breast

His open palms, Mysterious are thy ways And merciful, O gracious Lord! he cried, Who to this end hast thus been pleased to lead

My wandering steps! O Father, this thy son

Hath sinn'd and gone astray: but hast not Thou

Said, When the sinner from his evil ways Turneth, that he shall save his soul alive,

And Angels at the sight rejoice in Heaven? 200

Therefore do I, in thy most holy name, Into thy family receive again

Him who was lost, and in that name absolve

The Penitent. . . So saying on the head Of Julian solemnly he laid his hands.

Then to the altar tremblingly he turn'd, And took the bread, and breaking it, pursued.

Julian! receive from me the Bread of Life! In silence reverently the Count partook The reconciling rite, and to his lips 210 Roderick then held the consecrated cup.

Me too! exclaim'd Florinda. who till

Had listen'd speechlessly; Thou Man of God.

I also must partake! The Lord hath heard

My prayers! one sacrament, . . one hour. . . one grave. . .

One resurrection !

That dread office done.

Count Julian with amazement saw the Priest

Kneel down before him. By the sacra-

Which we have here partaken, Roderick

In this most aweful moment; by that

That holy faith which comforts thee in

Grant thy forgiveness, Julian, ere thou

Behold the man who most hath injured

Roderick, the wretched Goth, the guilty

Of all thy guilt, . . the unworthy instru-

Of thy redemption, . . kneels before thee here.

And prays to be forgiven!

Roderick! exclaim'd

The dying Count, . . Roderick! . . and from the floor

With violent effort half he raised him-

The spear hung heavy in his side, and

And weakness overcame him, that he fell Back on his daughter's lap. O Death, And free me from this pain! . . Receive cried he...

Passing his hand across his cold damp brow. . .

Thou tamest the strong limb, and conquerest

The stubborn heart! But yesterday bies T

One Heaven could not contain mine enemy

And me: and now I lift my dying voice To say, Forgive me, Lord, as I forgive Him who hath done the wrong! . . He closed his eyes

A moment; then with sudden impulse cried. . .

Roderick, thy wife is dead, . . the Church hath power

To free thee from thy vows, .. the broken

Might yet be heal'd, the wrong redress'd, the throne

Rebuilt by that same hand which pull'd it down.

And these cursed Africans. . . Oh for a month

Of that waste life which millions misbestow!..

His voice was passionate, and in his eye With glowing animation while he spake The vehement spirit shone: its effort soon

Was pass'd, and painfully with feeble

In slow and difficult utterance he pursued, . .

Vain hope, if all the evil was ordain'd, And this wide wreck the will and work of Heaven.

We but the poor occasion! Death will

All clear, and joining us in better worlds, Complete our union there! Do for me now One friendly office more: draw forth the spear,

his soul.

Saviour! exclaim'd the Goth, as he perform'd Goths Goths

The fatal service. Julian cried, O friend!.. 260

True friend! . . and gave to him his dying hand.

Then said he to Florinda, I go first,

Thou followest!..kiss me, child!..and now good night!

When from her father's body she arose, Her cheek was flush'd, and in her eyes there beam'd

A wilder brightness. On the Goth she gazed

While underneath the emotions of that hour

Exhausted life gave way. O God! she said,

Lifting her hands, thou hast restored me all, . .

All.. in one hour!.. and round his neck she threw 270

Her arms and cried, My Roderick! mine in Heaven!

Groaning, he clasp'd her close, and in that act

And agony her happy spirit fied.

XXV. RODERICK IN BATTLE

Eight thousand men had to Asturias march'd

Beneath Count Julian's banner; the remains

Of that brave army which in Africa

So well against the Musselman made head,

Till sense of injuries insupportable,

And raging thirst of vengeance, overthrew

Their leader's noble spirit. To revenge His quarrel, twice that number left their bones.

Slain in unnatural battle, on the field

Of Acres, when the sceptre from the Goths

By righteous Heaven was reft. Others had fallen

Consumed in sieges, alway by the Moor To the front of war opposed. The policy,

With whatsoever show of honour cloak'd.

Was gross, and this surviving band had oft

At their carousals, of the flagrant wrong, Held such discourse as stirs the mounting blood,

The common danger with one discontent Affecting chiefs and men. Nor had the bonds

Of rooted discipline and faith attach'd, Thus long restrain'd them, had they not known well

That Julian in their just resentment shared.

And fix'd their hopes on him. Slight impulse now

Sufficed to make these fiery martialists Break forth in open fury; and though first

Count Pedro listen'd with suspicious ear
To Julian's dying errand, deeming it
Some new decoy of treason, . . when he
found

A second legate follow'd Virimar,

And then a third, and saw the turbulence 30

Of the camp, and how against the Moors in haste

They form'd their lines, he knew that Providence

This hour had for his country interposed, And in such faith advanced to use the aid

Thus wondrously ordain'd. The eager Chiefs

Hasten to greet him, Cottila and Paul, Basil and Miro, Theudered, Gunderick,

Felix, and all who held authority: The zealous services of their brave host They proffer'd, and besought him instantly To lead against the African their force Combined, and in good hour assail a foe Divided, nor for such attack prepared.

While thus they communed, Roderick from the church

Came forth, and seeing Pedro, bent his

Toward them. Sirs, said he, the Count is dead:

He died a Christian, reconciled to Heaven.

In faith; and when his daughter had received

His dying breath, her spirit too took flight.

One sacrament, one death, united them; And I beseech ye, ye who from the work Of blood which lies before us may return, . .

If, as I think, it should not be my fate . . That in one grave with Christian ceremonies

Ye lay them side by side. In Heaven I ween

They are met through mercy:..ill befall the man

Who should in death divide them! . . Then he turn'd

His speech to Pedro in an under voice; The King, said he, I know with noble mind

Will judge of the departed; Christian

He died, and with a manly penitence: They who condemn him most should call to mind

How grievous was the wrong which madden'd him;

Be that remember'd in his history,

And let no shame be offer'd his remains. | More suited to my lord of Seville's use

As Pedro would have answer'd, a loud

Of menacing imprecation from the troops Arose; for Orpas, by the Moorish Chief Sent to allay the storm his villainy

Had stirr'd, came hastening on a milkwhite steed.

And at safe distance having check'd the

Beckon'd for parley. 'Twas Orelio

On which he rode, Roderick's own battle-horse.

Who from his master's hand had wont to feed.

And with a glad docility obey

His voice familiar. At the sight the Goth

Started, and indignation to his soul Brought back the thoughts and feelings

of old times. Suffer me, Count, he cried, to answer him.

And hold these back the while! Thus having said.

He waited no reply, but as he was,

Bareheaded, in his weeds, and all unarm'd.

Advanced toward the renegade. Sir

Quoth Orpas as he came. I hold no talk With thee; my errand is with Gun-

And the Captains of the host, to whom I bring

Such liberal offers and clear proof . .

The Goth,

Breaking with scornful voice his speech, exclaim'd.

What, could no steed but Roderick's serve thy turn?

I should have thought some sleek and sober mule

Long train'd in shackles to procession pace,

Than this good war-horse, . . he who never bore

A villain, until Orpas cross'd his back ! . .

Wretch! cried the astonish'd renegade, and stoopt.

Foaming with anger, from the saddle-

To reach his weapon. Ere the hasty hand

Trembling in passion could perform its will.

Roderick had seized the reins. How now, he cried.

Orelio! old companion, . . my good horse. . .

Off with this recreant burthen! . . And with that

He raised his hand, and rear'd and Thou hast thy proper master! Do thy back'd the steed.

To that remember'd voice and arm of power

Obedient. Down the helpless traitor fell

Violently thrown, and Roderick over him

Thrice led with just and unrelenting hand

The trampling hoofs. Go join Witiza

Where he lies howling, the avenger cried. And tell him Roderick sent thee!

At that sight. Count Julian's soldiers and the Asturian host

Set up a shout, a joyful shout, which

Wide through the welkin. Their exulting cry

With louder acclamation was renew'd. When from the expiring miscreant's neck they saw

That Roderick took the shield, and round his own

Hung it, and vaulted in the seat. Μv horse!

My noble horse! he cried, with flattering hand

Patting his high-arch'd neck! the renegade.

I thank him for't, hath kept thee daintily!

Orelio, thou art in thy beauty still, 120 Thy pride and strength! Orelio, my good horse.

Once more thou bearest to the field thy

He who so oft hath fed and cherish'd

He for whose sake, wherever thou wert

Thou wert by all men honour'd. Once again

As thou wert wont: and bear him gloriously,

My beautiful Orelio, . . to the last . . .

The happiest of his fields! . . Then he drew forth

The scymitar, and waving it aloft, Rode toward the troops; its unaccustom'd shape

Disliked him; Renegade in all things! cried

The Goth, and cast it from him; to the Chiefs

Then said, If I have done ye service

Help me, I pray you, to a Spanish sword!

The trustiest blade that e'er in Bilbilis

Was dipt, would not to-day be misbestowed

On this right hand! . . Go some one, Gunderick cried.

And bring Count Julian's sword. Whoe'er thou art.

The worth which thou hast shown avenging him 140 Entitles thee to wear it. But thou goest For battle unequipp'd: . . haste there and strip

Yon villain of his armour!

Late he spake,

So fast the Moors came on. It matters

Replied the Goth; there's many a mountaineer,

Who in no better armour cased this day Than his wonted leathern gipion, will be found

In the hottest battle, yet bring off untouch'd

The unguarded life he ventures... Taking then

Count Julian's sword, he fitted round his wrist

The chain, and eyeing the elaborate steel With stern regard of joy, The African Under unhappy stars was born, he cried. Who tastes thy edge! . . Make ready for the charge!

They come . . they come ! . . On, brethren, to the field! . .

The word is Vengeance!

Vengeance was the word: From man to man, and rank to rank it pass'd,

By every heart enforced, by every voice Sent forth in loud defiance of the foe.

The enemy in shriller sounds return'd Their Akbar and the Prophet's trusted name.

The horsemen lower'd their spears, the infantry

Deliberately with slow and steady step Advanced; the bowstrings twang'd, and arrows hiss'd,

And javelins hurtled by. Anon the hosts

Met in the shock of battle, horse and man Conflicting; shield struck shield, and sword and mace

And curtle-axe on helm and buckler The intrepid steed, and deals from side rang:

Armour was riven, and wounds were interchanged.

And many a spirit from its mortal hold Hurried to bliss or bale. Well did the Chiefs

Of Julian's army in that hour support Their old esteem; and well Count Pedro there

Enhanced his former praise; and by his

Rejoicing like a bridegroom in the strife, Alphonso through the host of infidels Bore on his bloody lance dismay and death.

But there was worst confusion and uproar.

There widest slaughter and dismay, where, proud

Of his recover'd Lord, Orelio plunged Through thickest ranks, trampling beneath his feet

The living and the dead. Where'er he

The Moors divide and fly. What man is this.

Appall'd they say, who to the front of war Bareheaded offers thus his naked life? Replete with power he is, and terrible, Like some destroying Angel! Sure his

Have drank of Kaf's dark fountain, and he comes

lips

Strong in his immortality! Fly! fly! They said, this is no human foe!.. Nor

Of wonder fill'd the Spaniards when they

How flight and terror went before his

And slaughter in his path. Behold, cries one.

With what command and knightly ease he sits

to side

His dreadful blows! Not Roderick in his power

Bestrode with such command and majesty

That noble war-horse. His loose robe this day

Is death's black banner, shaking from its folds

Dismay and ruin. Of no mortal mould Is he who in that garb of peace affronts Whole hosts, and sees them scatter where he turns!

Auspicious Heaven beholds us, and some Saint

Revisits earth!

Ay, cries another, Heaven Hath ever with especial bounty blest Above all other lands its favour'd Spain; Chusing her children forth from all mankind

For its peculiar people, as of yore Abraham's ungrateful race beneath the Law.

Who knows not how on that most holy night

When peace on Earth by Angels was proclaim'd,

The light which o'er the fields of Bethlehem shone,

Irradiated whole Spain? not just display'd,

As to the Shepherds, and again with-drawn;

All the long winter hours from eve till

Her forests and her mountains and her plains,

Her hills and valleys were embathed in light.

A light which came not from the sun or moon

Or stars, by secondary powers dispensed,

But from the fountain-springs the Light of Light 220

Effluent. And wherefore should we not believe

That this may be some Saint or Angel, charged

To lead us to miraculous victory?

Hath not the Virgin Mother oftentimes Descending, clothed in glory, sanctified With feet adorable our happy soil?..

Mark'd ye not, said another, how he cast In wrath the unhallow'd scymitar away,

And called for Christian weapon? Oh be sure

This is the aid of Heaven! On, comrades, on! 230

A miracle to-day is wrought for Spain! Victory and Vengeance! Hew the miscreants down,

And spare not! hew them down in sacrifice!

God is with us! his Saints are in the field!

Victory! miraculous Victory!

Thus they
Inflamed with wild belief the keen desire
Of vengeance on their enemies abhorr'd.
The Moorish chief, meantime, o'erlook'd
the fight

From an eminence, and cursed the renegade

Whose counsels sorting to such ill effect
Had brought this danger on. Lo, from
the East 241

Comes fresh alarm! a few poor fugitives Well-nigh with fear examinate came up, From Covadonga flying, and the rear

Of that destruction, scarce with breath to tell

Their dreadful tale. When Abulcacem heard,

Stricken with horror, like a man bereft Of sense, he stood. O Prophet, he exclaim'd,

A hard and cruel fortune hast thou brought 249

This day upon thy servant! Must I then Here with disgrace and ruin close a life Of glorious deeds? But how should man resist

Fate's irreversible decrees, or why Murmur at what must be? They who survive

May mourn the evil which this day begins:

My part will soon be done!.. Grief then gave wav

To rage, and cursing Guisla, he pursued, Oh that that treacherous woman were but here!

It were a consolation to give her The evil death she merits!

That reward For She hath had, a Moor replied. when we reach'd 261

The entrance of the vale, it was her choice

There in the farthest dwellings to be left.

Lest she should see her brother's face; but thence

We found her flying at the overthrow, And visiting the treason on her head, Pierced her with wounds. . . Poor vengeance for a host

Destroyed! said Abulcacem in his soul. Howbeit, resolving to the last to do His office, he roused up his spirit. Strike off Count Eudon's head! he cried: the fear 271

Which brought him to our camp will bring him else

In arms against us now; For Sisibert And Ebba, he continued thus in thought, Their uncle's fate for ever bars all plots Of treason on their part; no hope have they

Of safety but with us. He call'd them then

With chosen troops to join him in the front

Of battle, that by bravely making head, Retreat might now be won. Then fiercer raged 280

The conflict, and more frequent cries of death.

Mingling with imprecations and with pravers.

Rose through the din of war.

By this the blood

Which Deva down her fatal channel pour'd,

Purpling Pionia's course, had reach'd and stain'd

The wider stream of Sella. Soon far off The frequent glance of spears and gleam of arms

Were seen, which sparkled to the westering orb,

Where down the vale impatient to complete

The glorious work so well that day begun,

Pelayo led his troops. On foot they came.

Chieftains and men alike; the Oaken Cross

Triumphant borne on high, precedes their march.

And broad and bright the argent banner shone.

Roderick, who dealing death from side to side.

Had through the Moorish army now made way,

Beheld it flash, and judging well what aid

Approach'd, with sudden impulse that way rode,

To tell of what had pass'd,..lest in the strife

They should engage with Julian's men, and mar

The mighty consummation. One ran on To meet him fleet of foot, and having given

His tale to this swift messenger, the Like one who sees a spectre, and ex-Goth

Halted awhile to let Orelio breathe. Siverian, quoth Pelayo, if mine eyes

Deceive me not, you horse, whose reeking sides

Are red with slaughter, is the same on whom

The apostate Orpas in his vauntery Wont to parade the streets of Cordoba. But thou shouldst know him best: regard him well: 310

Is't not Orelio?

Either it is he.

The old man replied, or one so like to

Whom all thought matchless, that similitude

Would be the greater wonder. behold.

What man is he who in that disarray Doth with such power and majesty bestride

The noble steed, as if he felt himself

In his own proper seat? Look how he

To cherish him; and how the gallant

Curves up his stately neck, and bends his head.

As if again to court that gentle touch,

And answer to the voice which praises him.

Can it be Maccabee? rejoin'd the King, Or are the secret wishes of my soul

Indeed fulfill'd, and hath the grave given up

Its dead? . . So saying, on the old man he turn'd

Eyes full of wide astonishment, which told

The incipient thought that for incredible He spake no farther. But enough had pass'd. 329

For old Siverian started at the words

claim'd.

Blind that I was to know him not till now!

My Master, O my Master!

He meantime

With easy pace moved on to meet their march.

King, to Pelayo he began, this day By means scarce less than miracle, thy

throne Is stablish'd, and the wrongs of Spain

revenged.

Orpas the accursed, upon yonder field Lies ready for the ravens. By the Moors

Treacherously slain, Count Julian will be found

Before Saint Peter's altar: unto him Grace was vouchsafed; and by that holy power

Which at Visonia from the Primate's hand

Of his own proper act to me was given, Unworthy as I am, . . yet sure I think Not without mystery as the event hath shown, . .

Did I accept Count Julian's penitence, And reconcile the dying man to Heaven. Beside him hath his daughter fallen asleep;

Deal honourably with his remains, and

One grave with Christian rites receive them both.

Is it not written that as the Tree falls So it shall lie?

In this and all things else, Pelayo answer'd, looking wistfully Upon the Goth, thy pleasure shall be done.

Then Roderick saw that he was known, and turn'd

His head away in silence. But the old man

Laid hold upon his bridle, and look'd up In his master's face, weeping and silently.

Thereat the Goth with fervent pressure

His hand, and bending down toward him

My good Siverian, go not thou this day To war! I charge thee keep thyself from harm!

Thou art past the age for battles, and with whom

Hereafter should thy mistress talk of me If thou wert gone?.. Thou seest I am unarm'd:

Thus disarray'd as thou beholdest me, Clean through you miscreant army have

My way unhurt; but being once by Heaven

Preserved, I would not perish with the

Of having wilfully provoked my death. Give me thy helmet and thy cuirass!.. nay, . .

Thou wert not wont to let me ask in

Nor to gainsay me when my will was known!

To thee methinks I should be still the King.

Thus saying, they withdrew a little way

Within the trees. Roderick alighted

And in the old man's armour dight him-

Dost thou not marvel by what wondrous chance.

Said he, Orelio to his master's hand 380 Hath been restored? I found the renegade

Of Seville on his back, and hurl'd him How dear thou art to me these tears down

Headlong to the earth. The noble animal

Rejoicingly obey'd my hand to shake His recreant burthen off, and trample out The life which once I spared in evil hour.

Now let me meet Witiza's viperous sons In vonder field, and then I may go rest In peace, .. my work is done!

And nobly done!

Exclaim'd the old man. Oh! thou art greater now 300

Than in that glorious hour of victory When grovelling in the dust Witiza lay, The prisoner of thy hand!.. Roderick replied.

O good Siverian, happier victory

Thy son hath now achieved! . . the victory

Over the world, his sins, and his despair. If on the field my body should be found, See it, I charge thee, laid in Julian's grave.

And let no idle ear be told for whom Thou mournest. Thou wilt use Orelio As doth beseem the steed which hath so oft

Carried a King to battle; . . he hath done

Good service for his rightful Lord today.

And better yet must do. Siverian, now Farewell! I think we shall not meet again

Till it be in that world where never change

Is known, and they who love shall part no more.

Commend me to my mother's prayers, and say

That never man enjoy'd a heavenlier

Than Roderick at this hour. O faithful friend.

may tell!

With that he fell upon the old man's neck:

Then vaulted in the saddle, gave the reins,

And soon rejoin'd the host. On, comrades, on!

Victory and Vengeance! he exclaim'd, and took

The lead on that good charger, he alone Horsed for the onset. They with one consent

Gave all their voices to the inspiring cry, Victory and Vengeance! and the hills and rocks

Caught the prophetic shout and roll'd it round.

Count Pedro's people heard amid the heat

Of battle, and return'd the glad acclaim. The astonish'd Musselmen, on all sides charged,

Hear that tremendous cry; yet manfully

They stood, and every where with gallant front

Opposed in fair array the shock of war. Desperately they fought, like men expert in arms,

And knowing that no safety could be found,

Save from their own right hands. No former day 429

Of all his long career had seen their chief Approved so well; nor had Witiza's sons Ever before this hour achieved in fight Such feats of resolute valour. Sisibert Beheld Pelayo in the field afoot,

And twice essay'd beneath his horse's feet

To thrust him down. Twice did the Prince evade

The shock, and twice upon his shield received

The fratricidal sword. Tempt me no more,

Son of Witiza, cried the indignant chief, Lest I forget what mother gave thee birth!

Go meet thy death from any hand but mine!

He said, and turn'd aside. Fitliest from me!

Exclaim'd a dreadful voice, as through the throng

Orelio forced his way; fitliest from me Receive the rightful death too long withheld!

'Tis Roderick strikes the blow! And as he spake,

Upon the traitor's shoulder fierce he drove

The weapon, well-bestow'd. He in the seat

Totter'd and fell. The Avenger hasten'd on

In search of Ebba; and in the heat of fight 450

Rejoicing and forgetful of all else, Set up his cry as he was wont in youth, Roderick the Goth!..his war-cry

known so well.

Pelayo eagerly took up the word,

And shouted out his kinsman's name beloved,

Roderick the Goth! Roderick and Victory!

Roderick and Vengeance! Odoar gave it forth;

Urban repeated it, and through his ranks Count Pedro sent the cry. Not from the field

Of his great victory, when Witiza fell, With louder acclamations had that name 461

Been borne abroad upon the winds of heaven.

The unreflecting throng, who yesterday, If it had pass'd their lips, would with a curse

Have clogg'd it, echoed it as if it came

From some celestial voice in the air, reveal'd

To be the certain pledge of all their hopes.

Roderick the Goth! Roderick and Victory!

Roderick and Vengeance! O'er the field it spread,

All hearts and tongues uniting in the cry;
470

Mountains and rocks and vales reechoed round;

And he, rejoicing in his strength, rode on,

Laying on the Moors with that good sword, and smote,

And overthrew, and scatter'd, and destroy'd,

And trampled down; and still at every blow

Exultingly he sent the war-cry forth, Roderick the Goth! Roderick and Victory!

Roderick and Vengeance!

Thus he made his way,

Smiting and slaying through the astonish'd ranks, 479

Till he beheld, where on a fiery barb, Ebba, performing well a soldier's part, Dealt to the right and left his deadly blows.

With mutual rage they met. The renegade

Displays a scymitar, the splendid gift Of Walid from Damascus sent; its hilt Emboss'd with gems, its blade of perfect steel,

Which, like a mirror sparkling to the sun

With dazzling splendour, flash'd. The Goth objects

His shield, and on its rim received the edge

Driven from its aim aside, and of its force 490

Diminish'd. Many a frustrate stroke was dealt

On either part, and many a foin and thrust

Aim'd and rebated; many a deadly blow,

Straight, or reverse, delivered and repell'd.

Roderick at length with better speed hath reach'd

The apostate's turban, and through all its folds

The true Cantabrian weapon making way Attain'd his forehead. Wretch! the avenger cried,

It comes from Roderick's hand! Roderick the Goth,

Who spared, who trusted thee, and was betray'd! 500

Go tell thy father now how thou hast sped

With all thy treasons! Saying thus he seized

The miserable, who, blinded now with blood,

Reel'd in the saddle; and with sidelong step

Backing Orelio, drew him to the ground. He shrieking, as beneath the horse's feet He fell, forgot his late-learnt creed, and called

On Mary's name. The dreadful Goth pass'd on,

Still plunging through the thickest war, and still

Scattering, where'er he turn'd, the affrighted ranks. 510

O who could tell what deeds were wrought that day;

Or who endure to hear the tale of rage, Hatred, and madness, and despair, and fear.

Horror, and wounds, and agony, and death,

The cries, the blasphemies, the shrieks, and groans,

And prayers, which mingled with the din of arms

In one wild uproar of terrific sounds; While over all predominant was heard, Reiterate from the conquerors o'er the field.

Roderick the Goth! Roderick and Victory! 520

Roderick and Vengeance!.. Woe for Africa!

Woe for the circumcised! Woe for the faith

Of the lying Ishmaelite that hour! The Chiefs

Have fallen; the Moors, confused and captainless,

And panic-stricken, vainly seek to escape The inevitable fate. Turn where they will.

Strong in his cause, rejoicing in success, Insatiate at the banquet of revenge,

The enemy is there; look where they will,

Death hath environed their devoted ranks: 530

Fly where they will, the avenger and the sword

Await them, . . wretches! whom the righteous arm

Hath overtaken!.. Join'd in bonds of faith

Accurs'd, the most flagitious of mankind From all parts met are here; the apostate Greek,

The vicious Syrian, and the sullen Copt, The Persian cruel and corrupt of soul, The Arabian robber, and the prowling

The Arabian robber, and the prowling sons

Of Africa, who from their thirsty sands Pray that the locusts on the peopled plain 540

May settle and prepare their way. Conjoined Beneath an impious faith, which sanctifies

To them all deeds of wickedness and blood...

Yea, and halloos them on, . . here are they met

To be conjoin'd in punishment this hour.

For plunder, violation, massacre,

All hideous, all unutterable things,

The righteous, the immitigable sword

Exacts due vengeance now! the cry of blood

Is heard: the measure of their crimes is full; 550

Such mercy as the Moor at Auria gave, Such mercy hath he found this dreadful hour!

The evening darken'd, but the avenging sword

Turn'd not away its edge till night had closed

Upon the field of blood. The Chieftains then

Blew the recall, and from their perfect work

Return'd rejoicing, all but he for whom All look'd with most expectance. He full sure

Had thought upon that field to find his

Desired, and with Florinda in the grave 560

Rest, in indissoluble union join'd.

But still where through the press of war he went

Half-arm'd, and like a lover seeking death,

The arrows pass'd him by to right and left,

The spear-point pierced him not, the scymitar

Glanced from his helmet; he, when he beheld

The rout complete, saw that the shield of Heaven

Had been extended over him once more, And bowed before its will. Upon the banks

Of Sella was Orelio found, his legs 570 And flanks incarnadined, his poitral smeared

With froth and foam and gore, his silver

Sprinkled with blood, which hung on every hair,

Aspersed like dew-drops; trembling there he stood

From the toil of battle, and at times sent forth

His tremulous voice far echoing loud and shrill.

seem'd

To call the master whom he loved so well.

And who had thus again forsaken him. Siverian's helm and cuirass on the grass Lay near; and Julian's sword, its hilt and chain

Clotted with blood; but where was he whose hand

Had wielded it so well that glorious day?..

Days, months, and years, and generations pass'd,

And centuries held their course, before, far off

Within a hermitage near Viseu's walls A humble tomb was found, which bore inscribed

A frequent anxious cry, with which he In ancient characters King Roderick's name.

SELECTED MINOR POEMS

ŦΩ

THE HOLLY TREE

[First published in The Morning Post, Dec. 17, 1798, afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

1

O READER! hast thou ever stood to see The Holly Tree?

The eye that contemplates it well perceives

Its glossy leaves

Order'd by an intelligence so wise,

As might confound the Atheist's sophistries.

•

Below, a circling fence, its leaves are seen

Wrinkled and keen;

No grazing cattle through their prickly round

Can reach to wound;

But as they grow where nothing is to fear.

Smooth and unarm'd the pointless leaves appear.

3

I love to view these things with curious eyes,

And moralize:

And in this wisdom of the Holly Tree Can emblems see

Wherewith perchance to make a pleasant rhyme,

One which may profit in the after time.

4

Thus, though abroad perchance I might appear

Harsh and austere.

To those who on my leisure would intrude

Reserved and rude.

Gentle at home amid my friends I'd be Like the high leaves upon the Holly Tree.

5

And should my youth, as youth is apt I know.

Some harshness show,

All vain asperities I day by day

Would wear away,

Till the smooth temper of my age should be

Like the high leaves upon the Holly Tree. 30

ß

And as when all the summer trees are seen

So bright and green,

The Holly leaves a sober hue display Less bright than they.

But when the bare and wintry woods we see,

What then so cheerful as the Holly Tree?

7

So serious should my youth appear among

The thoughtless throng,

So would I seem amid the young and gay

More grave than they, 40
That in my age as cheerful I might be
As the green winter of the Holly Tree.

Westbury, 1798.

THE DEAD FRIEND

[Published in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

1

Nor to the grave, not to the grave, my Soul.

Descend to contemplate
The form that once was dear
The Spirit is not there
Which kindled that dead eye,
Which throbb'd in that cold heart,
Which in that motionless hand
Hath met thy friendly grasp.
The Spirit is not there!
It is but lifeless perishable flesh
That moulders in the grave;
Earth, air, and water's ministering
particles

Now to the elements
Resolved, their uses done.
Not to the grave, not to the grave, my
Soul,

Follow thy friend beloved, The spirit is not there!

2

Often together have we talk'd of death;
How sweet it were to see
All doubtful things made clear; 20
How sweet it were with powers
Such as the Cherubim,
To view the depth of Heaven!
O Edmund! thou hast first
Begun the travel of Eternity!
I look upon the stars,
And think that thou art there,
Unfetter'd as the thought that follows

thee.

And we have often said how sweet it were

With unseen ministry of angel power 30
To watch the friends we loved.
Edmund! we did not err!

Sure I have felt thy presence! Thou hast given

A birth to holy thought,

Has kept me from the world unstain'd

and pure.

Edmund! we did not err!
Our best affections here
They are not like the toys of infancy;
The Soul outgrows them not;
We do not cast them off;
Oh if it could be so.

It were indeed a dreadful thing to die!

4

Not to the grave, not to the grave, my Soul.

Follow thy friend beloved!

But in the lonely hour,
But in the evening walk,
Think that he companies thy solitude;
Think that he holds with thee
Mysterious intercourse;
And though remembrance wake a tear,
There will be joy in grief.

Westbury, 1799.

TO MARY

[First published in The Morning Post, Oct. 20, 1803, under the title: 'Stanzas written after a Long Absence.']

Mary! ten chequer'd years have past Since we beheld each other last; Yet, Mary, I remember thee, Nor canst thou have forgotten me.

The bloom was then upon thy face, Thy form had every youthful grace; I too had then the warmth of youth, And in our hearts was all its truth.

We conversed, were there others by, With common mirth and random eye; But when escaped the sight of men, 11 How serious was our converse then! 20

10

Our talk was then of years to come, Of hopes which ask'd a humble doom, Themes which to loving thoughts might move.

Although we never spake of love.

At our last meeting sure thy heart Was even as loth as mine to part; And yet we little thought that then We parted . . not to meet again.

Long, Mary! after that adieu, My dearest day-dreams were of you; In sleep I saw you still, and long Made you the theme of secret song.

When manhood and its cares came on, The humble hopes of youth were gone; And other hopes and other fears Effaced the thoughts of happier years.

Meantime through many a varied year Of thee no tidings did I hear, 30 And thou hast never heard my name Save from the vague reports of fame.

But then I trust detraction's lie Hath kindled anger in thine eye; And thou my praise wert proud to see,.. My name should still be dear to thee.

Ten years have held their course; thus late

I learn the tidings of thy fate;

I learn the tidings of thy fate; A Husband and a Father now, Of thee, a Wife and Mother thou.

And, Mary, as for thee I frame
A prayer which hath no selfish aim,
No happier lot can I wish thee
Than such as Heaven hath granted me.

London, 1802.

FUNERAL SONG, FOR THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE OF WALES

[Published in The Annual Register for 1827 and in Friendship's Offering for 1828.]

In its summer pride array'd,
Low our Tree of Hope is laid!
Low it lies:.. in evil hour,
Visiting the bridal bower,
Death hath levell'd root and flower.
Windsor, in thy sacred shade,
(This the end of pomp and power!)
Have the rites of death been paid:
Windsor, in thy sacred shade
Is the Flower of Brunswick laid!

Ye whose relics rest around,
Tenants of this funeral ground!
Know ye, Spirits, who is come,
By immitigable doom
Summon'd to the untimely tomb?
Late with youth and splendour crown'd,
Late in beauty's vernal bloom,
Late with love and joyaunce blest!
Never more lamented guest
Was in Windsor laid to rest. 20

Henry, thou of saintly worth,
Thou, to whom thy Windsor gave
Nativity and name, and grave;
Thou art in this hallowed earth
Cradled for the immortal birth;
Heavily upon his head
Ancestral crimes were visited:
He, in spirit like a child,
Meek of heart and undefiled,
Patiently his crown resign'd,
And fix'd on heaven his heavenly mind,
Blessing, while he kiss'd the rod,
His Redeemer and his God.
Now may he in realms of bliss
Greet a soul as pure as his.

Passive as that humble spirit,
Lies his bold dethroner too;
A dreadful debt did he inherit
To his injured lineage due;
Ill-starr'd prince, whose martial merit 40
His own England long might rue!
Mournful was that Edward's fame,
Won in fields contested well,
While he sought his rightful claim:
Witness Aire's unhappy water,
Where the ruthless Clifford fell;
And when Wharfe ran red with
slaughter,
On the day of Towton's field.

On the day of Towton's field, Gathering, in its guilty flood, The carnage and the ill-spilt blood That forty thousand lives could yield. Cressy was to this but sport, . . Poictiers but a pageant vain; And the victory of Spain Seem'd a strife for pastime meant, And the work of Agincourt Only like a tournament: Half the blood which there was spent, Had sufficed again to gain Anjou and ill-yielded Maine, Normandy and Aquitaine, And Our Lady's ancient towers, Maugre all the Valois' powers, Had a second time been ours. . . A gentle daughter of thy line, Edward, lays her dust with thine.

Thou, Elizabeth, art here;
Thou to whom all griefs were known;
Who wert placed upon the bier
In happier hour than on the throne. 70
Fatal daughter, fatal mother,
Raised to that ill-omen'd station,
Father, uncle, sons, and brother,
Mourn'd in blood her elevation!
Woodville, in the realms of bliss,
To thine offspring thou may'st say,
Early death is happiness;
And favour'd in their lot are they

Who are not left to learn below
That length of life is length of woe.
Lightly let this ground be prest;
A broken heart is here at rest.

But thou, Seymour, with a greeting,
Such as sisters use at meeting,
Joy, and sympathy, and love,
Wilt hail her in the seats above.
Like in loveliness were ye,
By a like lamented doom,
Hurried to an early tomb.
While together, spirits blest,
Fellow angels shall ye be
In the angelic company.

Henry, too, hath here his part; At the gentle Seymour's side, With his best beloved bride, Cold and quiet, here are laid The ashes of that fiery heart. Not with his tyrannic spirit, Shall our Charlotte's soul inherit; No, by Fisher's hoary head,-By More, the learned and the good,-By Katharine's wrongs and Boleyn's blood,-By the life so basely shed Of the pride of Norfolk's line, By the axe so often red, By the fire with martyrs fed, Hateful Henry, not with thee May her happy spirit be! 100

And here lies one whose tragic name A reverential thought may claim; That murder'd Monarch, whom the grave,

Revealing its long secret, gave Again to sight, that we might spy His comely face and waking eye! There, thrice fifty years, it lay, Exempt from natural decay, Unclosed and bright, as if to say, A plague, of bloodier, baser birth, 119
Than that beneath whose rage he bled,
Was loose upon our guilty earth;—
Such aweful warning from the dead,
Was given by that portentous eye;
Then it closed eternally.

Ye whose relics rest around. Tenants of this funeral ground; Even in your immortal spheres, What fresh yearnings will ve feel. When this earthly guest appears! Us she leaves in grief and tears: 130 But to you will she reveal Tidings of old England's weal; Of a righteous war pursued, Long, through evil and through good, With unshaken fortitude: Of peace, in battle twice achieved: Of her fiercest foe subdued, And Europe from the yoke reliev'd, Upon that Brabantine plain! Such the proud, the virtuous story, 140 Such the great, the endless glory Of her father's splendid reign! He who wore the sable mail. Might at this heroic tale, Wish himself on earth again.

One who reverently, for thee, Raised the strain of bridal verse, Flower of Brunswick! mournfully Lays a garland on thy herse.

MY DAYS AMONG THE DEAD ARE PAST

1

My days among the Dead are past; Around me I behold, Where'er these casual eyes are cast, The mighty minds of old; My never-failing friends are they, With whom I converse day by day. With them I take delight in weal,
And seek relief in woe;
And while I understand and feel
How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedew'd
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

3

My thoughts are with the Dead, with them
I live in long-past years,
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
Partake their hopes and fears,
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with an humble mind.

1

My hopes are with the Dead, anon
My place with them will be,
And I with them shall travel on
Through all Futurity;
Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
That will not perish in the dust.

Keswick, 1818.

IMITATED FROM THE PERSIAN

[First published in The Bijou for 1828.]

LORD! who art merciful as well as just, Incline thine ear to me, a child of dust! Not what I would, O Lord! I offer thee,

Alas! but what I can. [man, Father Almighty, who hast made me And bade me look to Heaven, for Thou art there.

Accept my sacrifice and humble prayer.

Four things which are not in thy

treasury,

I lay before thee, Lord, with this petition:..

> My nothingness, my wants, My sins, and my contrition.

10

Lowther Castle, 1828.

THE CATARACT OF LODORE

DESCRIBED IN RHYMES FOR THE NURSERY

[Published in Joanna Baillie's A Collection of Poems, chiefly Manuscript, 1823.]

' How does the Water Come down at Lodore?' My little boy ask'd me Thus, once on a time: And moreover he task'd me To tell him in rhyme. Anon at the word. There first came one daughter And then came another. To second and third 10 The request of their brother. And to hear how the water Comes down at Lodore. With its rush and its roar. As many a time They had seen it before. So I told them in rhyme, For of rhymes I had store: And 'twas in my vocation For their recreation 20 That so I should sing: Because I was Laureate To them and the King.

From its sources which well
In the Tarn on the fell;
From its fountains
In the mountains,
Its rills and its gills;
Through moss and through brake,
It runs and it creeps
For awhile, till it sleeps
In its own little Lake.
And thence at departing,
Awakening and starting,
It runs through the reeds
And away it proceeds,
Through meadow and glade.

In sun and in shade.

And through the wood-shelter, Among crags in its flurry, Helter-skelter. Hurry-scurry. Here it comes sparkling, And there it lies darkling; Now smoaking and frothing Its tumult and wrath in. Till in this rapid race On which it is bent, It reaches the place Of its steep descent. 50 The Cataract strong Then plunges along, Striking and raging As if a war waging Its caverns and rocks among: Rising and leaping, Sinking and creeping, Swelling and sweeping, Showering and springing, Flying and flinging, ć٥ Writhing and ringing, Eddying and whisking, Spouting and frisking, Turning and twisting, Around and around With endless rebound! Smiting and fighting, A sight to delight in; Confounding, astounding, Dizzying and deafening the ear with its sound.

Collecting, projecting,
Receding and speeding,
And shocking and rocking,
And darting and parting,
And threading and spreading,
And whizzing and hissing,
And dripping and skipping,
And hitting and splitting,
And shining and twining,
And rattling and battling,
And shaking and quaking,

90

And pouring and roaring,
And waving and raving,
And tossing and crossing,
And flowing and going,
And running and stunning,
And foaming and roaming,
And dinning and spinning,
And dropping and hopping,
And working and jerking,
And guggling and struggling,
And heaving and cleaving,
And moaning and groaning;

And glittering and frittering, And gathering and feathering, And whitening and brightening, And quivering and shivering, And hurrying and skurrying, And thundering and floundering;

Dividing and gliding and sliding, roo And falling and brawling and sprawling, And driving and riving and striving, And sprinkling and twinkling and wrinkling. [rounding,

And sounding and bounding and And bubbling and troubling and doubling.

And grumbling and rumbling and tumbling, [tering; And clattering and battering and shat-

Retreating and beating and meeting and sheeting, [spraying, Delaying and straying and playing and Advancing and prancing and glancing and dancing.

Recoiling, turmoiling and toiling and boiling,

And gleaming and streaming and steaming and beaming,

And rushing and flushing and brushing and gushing,

And flapping and rapping and clapping and slapping, [and twirling, And curling and whirling and purling

And thumping and plumping and bumping and jumping,

And dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing;

And so never ending, but always descending,

Sounds and motions for ever and ever are blending,

All at once and all o'er, with a mighty uproar, 120

And this way the Water comes down at Lodore.

Keswick, 1820.

SONNETS

[The two following Sonnets were numbered V and XV respectively among the Sonnets as printed in the collected edition of 1837-1838. The first was published in *Poems*, 1797; the second in *The Annual Anthology*, 1800.]

(1) THE EVENING RAINBOW [Published in *Poems*, 1797.]

MILD arch of promise, on the evening sky Thou shinest fair with many a lovely ray Each in the other melting. Much mine

Delights to linger on thee; for the day, Changeful and many-weather'd, seem'd to smile

Flashing brief splendour through the clouds awhile, [rain: Which deepen'd dark anon and fell in But pleasant is it now to pause, and view Thy various tints of frail and watery hue, And think the storm shall not return

Such is the smile that Piety bestows
On the good man's pale cheek, when he,
in peace

Departing gently from a world of woes, Anticipates the world where sorrows cease.

1794.

(2) WINTER

[Published in The Annual Anthology, 1800.]

A WRINKLED, crabbed man they picture thee.

Old Winter, with a rugged beard as grey As the long moss upon the apple-tree; Blue-lipt, an ice-drop at thy sharp blue nose.

Close muffled up, and on thy dreary way, Plodding alone through sleet and drifting snows.

They should have drawn thee by the high-heapt hearth,

Old Winter! seated in thy great arm'd chair,

Watching the children at their Christmas mirth;

Or circled by them as thy lips declare to Some merry jest or tale of murder dire, Ortroubled spirit that disturbs the night, Pausing at times to rouse the mouldering fire,

Or taste the old October brown and bright.

Westbury, 1799.

INSCRIPTIONS

[This and the four following inscriptions were numbered respectively XI, XVIII, XXX, XXXIII, and XXXVIII in the Inscriptions as published in the collected edition of 1837-1838.]

(1) IN A FOREST

[First published in The Morning Post, April 13, 1799, afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

STRANGER! whose steps have reach'd this solitude.

Know that this lonely spot was dear to

Devoted with no unrequited zeal

To Nature. Here, delighted he has
heard

The rustling of these woods, that now perchance

Melodious to the gale of summer move; And underneath their shade on you smooth rock.

With grey and yellow lichens overgrown, Often reclined; watching the silent flow Of this perspicuous rivulet, that steals to Along its verdant course, . . till all around

Had fill'd his senses with tranquillity, And ever soothed in spirit he return'd A happier, better man. Stranger! per-

chance,

Therefore the stream more lovely to thine eye

Will glide along, and to the summer gale
The woods wave more melodious.
Cleanse thou then

The weeds and mosses from this letter'd stone.

Westbury, 1798.

(2) EPITAPH

HERE in the fruitful vales of Somerset Was Emma born, and here the Maiden grew

To the sweet season of her womanhood Beloved and lovely, like a plant whose leaf

And bud and blossom all are beautiful. In peacefulness her virgin years were past;

And when in prosperous wedlock she was given,

Amid the Cumbrian mountains far away She had her summer Bower. 'Twas like a dream

Of old Romance to see her when she plied 10

Her little skiff on Derwent's glassy lake; The roseate evening resting on the hills, The lake returning back the hues of heaven, Mountains and vales and waters all

With beauty, and in quietness; and she, Nymph-like, amid that glorious solitude A heavenly presence, gliding in her joy. But soon a wasting malady began

To prey upon her, frequent in attack, Yet with such flattering intervals as mook 20

The hopes of anxious love, and most of all
The sufferer, self-deceived. During
those days

Of treacherous respite, many a time hath he,

Who leaves this record of his friend, drawn back

Into the shadow from her social board, Because too surely in her cheek he saw The insidious bloom of death; and then her smiles

And innocent mirth excited deeper grief Than when long-look'd-for tidings came at last.

That, all her sufferings ended, she was laid 30

Amid Madeira's orange groves to rest.
O gentle Emma! o'er a lovelier form
Than thine, Earth never closed; nor
e'er did Heaven

Receive a purer spirit from the world. Keswick, 1810.

(3) AT BARROSA

THOUGH the four quarters of the world have seen

The British valour proved triumphantly Upon the French, in many a field farfamed.

Yet may the noble Island in her rolls
Of glory write Barrosa's name. For
there.

Not by the issue of deliberate plans Consulted well, was the fierce conflict won,

Nor by the leader's eye intuitive,

Nor force of either arm of war, nor art Of skill'd artillerist, nor the discipline ro Of troops to absolute obedience train'd;

But by the spring and impulse of the heart,

Brought fairly to the trial, when all else Seem'd, like a wrestler's garment, thrown aside;

By individual courage and the sense

Of honour, their old country's, and their own,

There to be forfeited, or there upheld; . . This warm'd the soldier's soul, and gave his hand

The strength that carries with it victory.

More to enhance their praise, the day
was fought
20

Against all circumstance; a painful march,

Through twenty hours of night and day prolong'd,

Forespent the British troops; and hope delay'd

Had left their spirits pall'd. But when the word

Was given to turn, and charge, and win the heights,

The welcome order came to them, like rain

Upon a traveller in the thirsty sands. Rejoicing, up the ascent, and in the front

Of danger, they with steady step advanced,

And with the insupportable bayonet 30 Drove down the foe. The vanquish'd Victor saw

And thought of Talavera, and deplored His eagle lost. But England saw wellpleased

Her old ascendency that day sustain'd; And Scotland, shouting over all her hills, Among her worthies rank'd another Graham.

(4) EPITAPH

[Published in The Literary Souvenir, 1827, under the title of 'A Soldier's Epitaph'.]

Steep is the soldier's path; nor are the heights

Of glory to be won without long toil
And arduous efforts of enduring hope;
Save when Death takes the aspirant by
the hand,

And cutting short the work of years, at once

Lifts him to that conspicuous eminence. Such fate was mine.—The standard of the Buffs

I bore at Albuhera, on that day
When, covered by a shower, and fatally
For friends misdeem'd, the Polish
lancers fell 10

Upon our rear. Surrounding me, they claim'd

My precious charge.—' Not but with life!' I cried,

And life was given for immortality.

The flag which to my heart I held, when wet

With that heart's blood, was soon victoriously

Regain'd on that great day. In former times,

Marlborough beheld it borne at Ramilies;

For Brunswick and for liberty it waved Triumphant at Culloden; and hath seen The lilies on the Caribbean shores 20 Abased before it. Then too in the front

Of battle did it flap exultingly,

When Douro, with its wide stream interposed,

Saved not the French invaders from attack,

Discomfiture, and ignominious rout.

My name is Thomas: undisgraced have I

Transmitted it. He who in days to come

May bear the honour'd banner to the field.

Will think of Albuhera, and of me.

(5) EPITAPH

[First published in The Literary Souvenir, 1828.]

Time and the world, whose magnitude and weight

Bear on us in this Now, and hold us here

To earth enthrall'd, . . what are they in the Past?

And in the prospect of the immortal Soul How poor a speck! Not here her resting-place,

Her portion is not here; and happiest they

Who, gathering early all that Earth can give,

Shake off its mortal coil, and speed for Heaven.

Such fate had he whose relics moulder here.

Few were his years, but yet enough to teach 10

Love, duty, generous feelings, high desires,

Faith, hope, devotion: and what more could length

Of days have brought him? What, but vanity,

Joys frailer even than health or human life:

Temptation, sin and sorrow, both too sure,

Evils that wound, and cares that fret the heart.

Repine not, therefore, ye who love the dead.

DEDICATION OF THE AUTHOR'S COLLOQUIES ON THE PRO-GRESS AND PROSPECTS OF SOCIETY

TO THE MEMORY OF THE REVEREND HERBERT HILL.

Formerly Student of Christ Church, Oxford; successively Chaplain to the British Factories at Porto and at Lisbon; and late Rector of Streatham; who was released from this life, Sept. 19, 1828, in the 80th year of his age.

Nor upon marble or sepulchral brass Have I the record of thy worth inscribed.

Dear Uncle! nor from Chantrev's chisel

A monumental statue, which might wear Through many an age thy venerable form.

Such tribute, were I rich in this world's wealth.

Should rightfully be rendered, in discharge

Of grateful duty, to the world evinced When testifying so by outward sign Its deep and inmost sense. But what

I can Is rendered piously, prefixing here Thy perfect lineaments, two centuries

Before thy birth by Holbein's happy hand

Prefigured thus. It is the portraiture Of More, the mild, the learned, and the good:

Traced in that better stage of human life.

When vain imaginations, troublous thoughts.

And hopes and fears have had their course, and left

The intellect composed, the heart at And won at once good will from all the rest.

Nor yet decay hath touch'd our mortal frame.

Such was the man whom Henry, of desert

Appreciant alway, chose for highest trust:

Whom England in that eminence approved:

Whom Europe honoured, and Erasmus loved.

Such was he ere heart-hardening bigotry

Obscured his spirit, made him with himself

Discordant, and contracting then his

With sour defeature marr'd his counten-

What he was, in his best and happiest time.

Even such wert thou, dear Uncle! such thy look

Benign and thoughtful; such thy placid mien:

Thine eve serene, significant and strong. Bright in its quietness, yet brightening

With quick emotion of benevolence.

Or flash of active fancy, and that mirth Which age with sober wisdom well accords.

Nor ever did true Nature, with more nice

Exactitude, fit to the inner man

The fleshly mould, than when she stampt on thine

Her best credentials, and bestow'd on thee

An aspect, to whose sure benignity Beasts with instinctive confidence could

Which at a glance obtain'd respect from

good.

Such as in semblance, such in word and deed

Lisbon beheld him, when for many a year The even tenour of his spotless life

Adorn'd the English Church. . . her minister

In that strong hold of Rome's Idolatry, To God and man approved. What Englishman,

Who in those peaceful days of Portugal Resorted thither, curious to observe

Her cities, and the works and ways of

But sought him, and from his abundant stores

Of knowledge profited? What stricken one.

Sent thither to protract a living death, Forlorn perhaps, and friendless else, but found

A friend in him? What mourners, . . who had seen

The object of their agonizing hopes

In that sad cypress ground deposited, 60 Wherein so many a flower of British growth.

Untimely faded and cut down, is laid, In foreign earth compress'd, . . but bore awav

A life-long sense of his compassionate

His Christian goodness? Faithful shepherd he.

And vigilant against the wolves, who there.

If entrance might be won, would straight beset

The dying stranger, and with merciless

Bay the death-bed. In every family Throughout his fold was he the welcome 70

Alike to every generation dear, The children's favourite, and the grand- Sometimes that likeness, not unconsire's friend,

Tried, trusted and beloved. So liberal too

In secret alms, even to his utmost means.

That they who served him, and who saw in part

The channels where his constant bounty

Maugre their own uncharitable faith,

Believed him, for his works, secure of Heaven.

It would have been a grief for me to think

perfectly The features. which express'd

That excellent mind. should irretrievably

From earth have pass'd away, existing

Only in some few faithful memories

Insoul'd, and not by any limner's skill To be imbodied thence. then

On him, in whose prophetic counterfeit Preserved, the children now, who were the crown

Of his old age, may see their father's face.

Here to the very life pourtray'd, as when

Spain's mountain passes, and her ilex

And fragrant wildernesses, side by side, With him I traversed, in my morn of vouth.

And gather'd knowledge from his full discourse.

Often in former years I pointed out, Well-pleased, the casual portrait, which so well

Assorted in all points; and haply since, While lingering o'er this meditative work.

sciously,

Hath tinged the strain; and therefore, for the sake

Of this resemblance, are these volumes

Thus to his memory properly inscribed.

O friend! O more than father! whom I found

Forbearing alway, alway kind: to whom

No gratitude can speak the debt I owe; Far on their earthly pilgrimage advanced Are they who knew thee when we drew the breath

Of that delicious clime! The most are

And whose yet survive of those who then Were in their summer season, on the

Of life hang here and there like wintry leaves. 110

Which the first breeze will from the bough bring down.

I, too, am in the sear, the yellow leaf. And yet, (no wish is nearer to my heart,) One arduous labour more, as unto thee In duty bound, full fain would I complete.

(So Heaven permit,) recording faithfully The heroic rise, the glories, the decline, Of that fallen country, dear to us,

The better portion of thy days was pass'd:

And where, in fruitful intercourse with

My intellectual life received betimes The bias it hath kept. Poor Portugal, In us thou harbouredst no ungrateful guests!

We loved thee well; Mother magnani-

Of mighty intellects and faithful hearts,... For such in other times thou wert, nor For a king's ransom, have detain'd thee yet

To be despair'd of, for not yet, methinks.

Degenerate wholly, . . yes, we loved thee well!

And in thy moving story, (so but life Be given me to mature the gathered store

Of thirty years,) poet and politick, And Christian sage, (only philosopher Who from the Well of living water drinks

Never to thirst again,) shall find, I ween, For fancy, and for profitable thought, Abundant food.

Alas! should this be given, Such consummation of my work will

Be but a mournful close, the one being

Whom to have satisfied was still to me A pure reward, outweighing far all breath

Of public praise. O friend revered, O guide

And fellow-labourer in this ample field, How large a portion of myself hath pass'd

With thee, from earth to Heaven!.. Thus they who reach

Grey hairs die piecemeal. But in good old age

Thou hast departed; not to be bewail'd, . .

Oh no! The promise on the Mount vouchsafed.

Nor abrogate by any later law

Reveal'd to man, . . that promise, as by thee

Full piously deserved, was faithfully 150 In thee fulfill'd, and in the laud thy days

Were long. I would not, as I saw thee last.

here, . .

Bent, like the antique sculptor's limbless trunk,

By chronic pain, yet with thine eye unquench'd,

The ear undimm'd, the mind retentive still.

The heart unchanged, the intellectual lamp

Burning in its corporeal sepulchre.

No; not if human wishes had had power To have suspended Nature's constant work.

Would they who loved thee have detain'd thee thus,

Waiting for death.

That trance is over. Thou Art enter'd on thy heavenly heritage; And I, whose dial of mortality Points to the eleventh hour, shall follow soon.

Meantime, with dutiful and patient hope,

I labour that our names conjoin'd may long

Survive, in honour one day to be held Where old Lisboa from her hills o'erlooks

Expanded Tagus, with its populous

shores 170
And pine woods, to Palmella's crested
height:

Nor there alone; but in those rising realms

Where now the offsets of the Lusian tree Push forth their vigorous shoots, . . from central plains,

Whence rivers flow divergent, to the gulph

Southward, where wild Parana disembogues

A sea-like stream; and northward, in a world

Of forests, where huge Orellana clips His thousand islands with his thousand arms.

LITTLE BOOK, IN GREEN AND GOLD

[Printed by Southey's cousin and son-inlaw, Herbert Hill, in Oliver Newman: With Other Poetical Remains, in 1845.]

LITTLE Book, in green and gold, Thou art thus bedight to hold ROBERT SOUTHEY'S Album Rhymes, Wrung from him in busy times: Not a few to his vexation. By importune application: Some in half-sarcastic strain. More against than with the grain: Other some, he must confess, Bubbles blown in idleness: Some in earnest, some in jest, Good for little at the best: Yet, because his Daughter dear Would collect them fondly here, Little Book, in gold and green, Thou art not unfitly seen Thus apparell'd for her pleasure, Like the casket of a treasure. Other owner, well I know, Never more can prize thee so.

Little Book, when thou art old,

Time will dim thy green and gold.

Little Book, thou wilt outlive
The pleasure thou wert made to give:
Dear domestic recollections,
Home-born loves, and old affections,
Incommunicable they:
And when these have past away,
As perforce they must, from earth,
Where is then thy former worth?
Other value, then, I ween,
Little Book, may supervene,
Happily if unto some
Thou in due descent shouldst come,
Who would something find in thee
Like a relic's sanctity,

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10

And in whom thou may'st awake, For thy former owner's sake, A pious thought, a natural sigh, A feeling of mortality.

When those feelings, and that race, Have in course of time given place, Little worth, and little prized, Disregarded or despised, Thou wilt then be bought and sold, In thy faded green and gold. Then, unless some curious eye Thee upon the shelf should spy, Dust will gather on thee there, And the worms, that never spare, Feed their fill within, and hide, Burrowing safely in thy side, Till transfigured out they come From that emblem of the tomb: Or, by mould and damp consumed, Thou to perish may'st be doom'd.

But if some collector find thee, He will, as a prize, re-bind thee; And thou may'st again be seen Gayly drest in gold and green.

9th September, 1831.

LINES WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF ROTHA QUILLINAN

[Printed, like the preceding poem, with Oliver Newman, in 1845].

ROTHA, after long delays, Since thy book must cross the Raise, Down I sit to turn a stave. Be it gay or be it grave.

Wiser wish than what thy name Prompts for thee I cannot frame; No where find a better theme Than thy native namesake stream. Lovelier river is there none Underneath an English sun;

From its source it issues bright Upon hoar Hellvellyn's height. Flowing where its summer voice 40 Makes the mountain herds rejoice: Down the dale it issues then, Not polluted there by men; While its lucid waters take Their pastoral course from lake to lake. Please the eye in every part, Lull the ear, and soothe the heart, 20 Till into Windermere sedate They flow and uncontaminate. Rotha, such from youth to age Be thy mortal pilgrimage; Thus in childhood blithe and free. Thus in thy maturity, Blest and blessing, may it be: And a course, in welfare past, Thus serenely close at last.

ODE

WRITTEN DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH BUONAPARTE, IN JANUARY, 1814

[First published in The Courier, Feb. 3, 1814, with a number of slight variations from the present text. Republished in *The Times*, April 21, 1814, in its present form.]

Who counsels peace at this momentous hour.

When God hath given deliverance to the oppress'd.

And to the injured power? Who counsels peace, when Vengeance like a flood

Rolls on, no longer now to be repress'd; When innocent blood

From the four corners of the world cries out

For justice upon one accursed head; When Freedom hath her holy banners spread

Over all nations, now in one just cause United; when with one sublime accord Europe throws off the yoke abhorr'd, And Loyalty and Faith and Ancient Laws Follow the avenging sword!

2

Woe, woe to England! woe and endless shame,

If this heroic land,

False to her feelings and unspotted fame, Hold out the olive to the Tyrant's hand! Woe to the world, if Buonaparte's throne Be suffer'd still to stand!

For by what names shall Right and Wrong be known, . .

What new and courtly phrases must we feign

For Falsehood, Murder, and all monstrous crimes,

If that perfidious Corsican maintain Still his detested reign,

And France, who yearns even now to break her chain,

Beneath his iron rule be left to groan?

No! by the innumerable dead,

Whose blood hath for his lust of power been shed,

Death only can for his foul deeds atone; That peace which Death and Judgement can bestow,

That peace be Buonaparte's, . . that alone!

3

For sooner shall the Ethiop change his skin,

Or from the Leopard shall her spots depart,

Than this man change his old flagitious heart.

Have ye not seen him in the balance weigh'd,

And there found wanting? On the stage of blood

Foremost the resolute adventurer stood;
And when, by many a battle won,
He placed upon his brow the crown, 40
Curbing delirious France beneath his
sway,

Then, like Octavius in old time,
Fair name might he have handed down,
Effacing many a stain of former crime.
Fool! should he cast away that

bright renown!

Fool! the redemption proffer'd should
he lose!

When Heaven such grace vouchsafed him that the way To Good and Evil lay Before him, which to choose.

1

But Evil was his Good, 50
For all too long in blood had he been
nurst.

And ne'er was earth with verier tyrant curst.

Bold man and bad,

Remorseless, godless, full of fraud and lies,

And black with murders and with perjuries,

Himself in Hell's whole panoply he clad;
No law but his own headstrong will
he knew.

No counsellor but his own wicked heart.

From evil thus portentous strength
he drew.

And trampled under foot all human ties, All holy laws, all natural charities. 61

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O France! beneath this fierce Barbarian's sway

Disgraced thou art to all succeeding times;

Rapine, and blood, and fire have mark'd thy way,

All loathsome, all unutterable crimes.

A curse is on thee. France! from far and wide

It hath gone up to Heaven. All lands have cried

For vengeance upon thy detested head! All nations curse thee, France! for wheresoe'er

In peace or war thy banner hath been spread.

All forms of human woe have follow'd there.

The Living and the Dead Cry out alike against thee! They who | The cause of all this blood and all these bear.

Crouching beneath its weight, thine iron voke.

Join in the bitterness of secret prayer The voice of that innumerable throng, Whose slaughter'd spirits day and night invoke

The Everlasting Judge of right and wrong,

How long, O Lord! Holy and Just, how long!

A merciless oppressor hast thou been, 80 Thyself remorselessly oppress'd meantime:

Greedy of war, when all that thou couldst gain

Was but to dye thy soul with deeper crime,

And rivet faster round thyself the chain. O blind to honour, and to interest blind.

When thus in abject servitude resign'd To this barbarian upstart, thou couldst brave

God's justice, and the heart of human kind!

Madly thou thoughtest to enslave the world.

Thyself the while a miserable slave. 90 Behold the flag of vengeance is unfurl'd! The dreadful armies of the North advance;

While England, Portugal, and Spain combined.

Give their triumphant banners to the wind.

And stand victorious in the fields of France.

One man hath been for ten long wretched years

tears:

One man in this most aweful point of time

Draws on thy danger, as he caused thy crime.

Wait not too long the event, 100 For now whole Europe comes against thee bent.

His wiles and their own strength the nations know:

Wise from past wrongs, on future peace intent.

The People and the Princes, with one mind.

From all parts move against the general foe:

One act of justice, one atoning blow, One execrable head laid low.

Even yet, O France ! averts thy punishment.

Open thine eyes! too long hast thou been blind:

Take vengeance for thyself, and for mankind! 110

France! if thou lovest thine ancient fame.

Revenge thy sufferings and thy shame!

By the bones which bleach on Jaffa's beach;

By the blood which on Domingo's shore Hath clogg'd the carrion-birds with gore;

By the flesh which gorged the wolves of Spain,

Or stiffen'd on the snowy plain Of frozen Moscovy;

By the bodies which lie all open to the sky.

Tracking from Elbe to Rhine the Tyrant's flight; 120

By the widow's and the orphan's cry;
By the childless parent's misery;
By the lives which he hath shed;
By the ruin he hath spread;

By the prayers which rise for curses on his head;

Redeem, O France! thine ancient fame,

Revenge thy sufferings and thy shame,

Open thine eyes!.. too long hast thou been blind;

Take vengeance for thyself, and for mankind!

9

By those horrors which the night 130
Witness'd, when the torches' light
To the assembled murderers show'd
Where the blood of Condé flow'd;
By thy murder'd Pichegru's fame;
By murder'd Wright, . . an English
name;

By murder'd Palm's atrocious doom;
By murder'd Hofer's martyrdom;
Oh! by the virtuous blood thus vilely
spilt,

The Villain's own peculiar private guilt,

Open thine eyes! too long hast thou been blind! 140

Take vengeance for thyself and for mankind!

Keswick.

BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES

THE MARCH TO MOSCOW

[First published in *The Courier*, June 23, 1814, and afterwards in 1837-1838, among the *Ballads and Metrical Tales*.]

1

THE Emperor Nap he would set off On a summer excursion to Moscow; The fields were green, and the sky was blue,

Morbleu! Parbleu! What a pleasant excursion to Moscow!

2

Four hundred thousand men and more Must go with him to Moscow: There were Marshals by the dozen,

And Dukes by the score;
Princes a few, and Kings one or two; 10
While the fields are so green, and the

While the fields are so green, and the sky so blue,

Morbleu! Parbleu! What a pleasant excursion to Moscow!

3

There was Junot and Augereau,
Heigh-ho for Moscow!
Dombrowsky and Poniatowsky,
Marshal Ney, lack-a-day!
General Rapp and the Emperor Nap;

Nothing would do
While the fields were so green, and the
sky so blue.

Morbleu! Parbleu! Nothing would do

For the whole of this crew, But they must be marching to Moscow.

4

The Emperor Nap he talk'd so big
That he frighten'd Mr. Roscoe.
John Bull, he cries, if you'll be wise,
Ask the Emperor Nap if he will please
To grant you peace upon your knees,
Because he is going to Moscow! 30

He'll make all the Poles come out of their holes,

And beat the Russians and eat the Prussians.

For the fields are green, and the sky is blue.

Morbleu! Parbleu!
And he'll certainly march to Moscow!

5

And Counsellor Brougham was all in a fume

At the thought of the march to Moscow: The Russians, he said, they were undone, And the great Fee-Faw-Fum

Would presently come 40
With a hop, step, and jump unto London.
For as for his conquering Russia,
However some persons might scoff it,
Do it he could, and do it he would,
And from doing it nothing would come
but good,

And nothing could call him off it.

Mr. Jeffrey said so, who must certainly know,

For he was the Edinburgh Prophet. They all of them knew Mr. Jeffrey's Review,

Which with Holy Writ ought to be reckon'd:

It was through thick and thin to its party true;

Its back was buff, and its sides were blue,
Morbleu! Parbleu! [too.
It served them for Law and for Gospel

6

But the Russians stoutly they turned-to Upon the road to Moscow.

Nap had to fight his way all through; They could fight, though they could not parlez-yous.

But the fields were green, and the sky was blue,

Morbleu! Parbleu! 60
And so he got to Moscow.

He found the place too warm for him,

For they set fire to Moscow.

To get there had cost him much

ado.

And then no better course he knew.

While the fields were green, and the sky was blue,

Morbleu! Parbleu!
But to march back again from
Moscow.

8

The Russians they stuck close to him
All on the road from Moscow.
There was Tormazow and Jemalow
And all the others that end in ow;
Milarodovitch and Jaladovitch
And Karatschkowitch,
And all the others that end in itch;
Schamscheff, Souchosaneff,

And Schepaleff,
And all the others that end in eff;
Wasiltschikoff, Kostomaroff,
And Tchoglokoff,

And all the others that end in off; Rajeffsky and Novereffsky And Rieffsky,

And all the others that end in effsky; Oscharoffsky and Rostoffsky, And all the others that end in offsky;

And Platoff he play'd them off, And Shouvaloff he shovell'd them off,

And Markoff he mark'd them off, And Krosnoff he cross'd them off, And Tuchkoff he touch'd them off, And Boroskoff he bored them off,

And Kutousoff he cut them off, And Parenzoff he pared them off, And Worronzoff he worried them off,

And Doctoroff he doctor'd them off, And Rodionoff he flogg'd them off. And last of all an Admiral came,

A terrible man with a terrible name,

A name which you all know by sight
very well;

But which no one can speak, and no one
can spell. [might,
They stuck close to Nap with all their
They were on the left and on the right,

They stuck close to Nap with all their They were on the left and on the right, Behind and before, and by day and by night,

He would rather parlez-vous than fight; But he look'd white and he look'd blue, Morbleu! Parbleu!

When parlez-vous no more would do, For they remember'd Moscow.

ę

And then came on the frost and snow
All on the road from Moscow. III
The wind and the weather he found in
that hour
Cared nothing for him nor for all

his power;
For him who, while Europe crouch'

For him who, while Europe crouch'd under his rod,

Put his trust in his fortune, and not in his God.

Worse and worse every day the elements grew, [so blue, The fields were so white and the sky Sacrebleu! Ventrebleu! What a horrible journey from Moscow!

10

What then thought the Emperor Nap
Upon the road from Moscow? 121
Why, I ween he thought it small delight
To fight all day, and to freeze all night:
And he was besides in a very great fright,
For a whole skin he liked to be in;
And so, not knowing what else to do,
When the fields were so white and the
sky so blue,
Morbleu! Parbleu!

Morbleu! Parbleu!

He stole away, I tell you true,
Upon the road from Moscow. 130
'Tis myself, quoth he, I must mind most;
So the Devil may take the hindmost.

11

Too cold upon the road was he,
Too hot had he been at Moscow;
But colder and hotter he may be,
For the grave is colder than Muscovy:
And a place there is to be kept in view
Where the fire is red and the brimstone
blue.

Morbleu! Parbleu!
Which he must go to,
If the Pope say true,

If he does not in time look about him; Where his namesake almost

He may have for his Host, He has reckon'd too long without him; If that host get him in Purgatory, He won't leave him there alone with his

He won't leave him there alone with his glory;

But there he must stay for a very long day,

For from thence there is no stealing away

As there was on the road from Moscow. Keswick, 1813.

LORD WILLIAM

[First published in The Morning Post, March 16, 1798, with the omission of Stanza 23; afterwards in Poems, vol. ii, 1799.]

No eye beheld when William plunged Young Edmund in the stream, No human ear but William's heard Young Edmund's drowning scream.

Submissive all the vassals own'd The murderer for their Lord, And he as rightful heir possess'd The house of Erlingford.

The ancient house of Erlingford
Stood in a fair domain,
And Severn's ample waters near
Roll'd through the fertile plain.

10

40

And often the way-faring man Would love to linger there, Forgetful of his onward road, To gaze on scenes so fair.

But never could Lord William dare
To gaze on Severn's stream;
In every wind that swept its waves
He heard young Edmund's scream. 20

In vain at midnight's silent hour Sleep closed the murderer's eyes, In every dream the murderer saw Young Edmund's form arise.

In vain by restless consoience driven Lord William left his home, Far from the scenes that saw his guilt, In pilgrimage to roam;

To other climes the pilgrim fled,
But could not fly despair;
He sought his home again, but peace
Was still a stranger there.

Slow were the passing hours, yet swift The months appear'd to roll; And now the day return'd that shook With terror William's soul;

A day that William never felt Return without dismay, For well had conscience kalendar'd Young Edmund's dying day.

A fearful day was that; the rains Fell fast with tempest roar, And the swoln tide of Severn spread Far on the level shore.

In vain Lord William sought the feast, In vain he quaff'd the bowl, And strove with noisy mirth to drown The anguish of his soul.

The tempest, as its sudden swell
In gusty howlings came, 50
With cold and death-like feeling seem'd
To thrill his shuddering frame.

Reluctant now, as night came on,
His lonely couch he prest;
And, wearied out, he sunk to sleep, . .
To sleep . . but not to rest.

Beside that couch his brother's form,
Lord Edmund, seem'd to stand,
Such and so pale as when in death
He grasp'd his brother's hand; 60

Such and so pale his face as when
With faint and faltering tongue,
To William's care, a dying charge,
He left his orphan son.

'I bade thee with a father's love My orphan Edmund guard;... Well, William, hast thou kept thy charge Take now thy due reward.'

He started up, each limb convulsed
With agonizing fear;
76
He only heard the storm of night, . .
'Twas music to his ear.

When lo! the voice of loud alarm
His inmost soul appals;
'What ho! Lord William, rise in haste!
The water saps thy walls!'

He rose in haste, beneath the walls

He saw the flood appear; [now,
It hemm'd him round, 'twas midnight

No human aid was near. 80

He heard a shout of joy, for now
A boat approach'd the wall,
And eager to the welcome aid
They crowd for safety all.

'My boat is small,' the boatman cried,
''Twill bear but one away;
Come in, Lord William, and do ye
In God's protection stay.'

Strange feeling fill'd them at his voice
Even in that hour of woe, 90
That, save their Lord, there was not one
Who wish'd with him to go.

But William leapt into the boat, His terror was so sore;

f Thou shalt have half my gold,' he cried,
'Haste.. haste to yonder shore.'

The boatman plied the oar, the boat
Went light along the stream;
Sudden Lord William heard a cry
Like Edmund's drowning scream. 100

The boatman paused, 'Methought I heard A child's distressful cry!'

''Twas but the howling wind of night,'
Lord William made reply.

'Haste . . haste . . ply swift and strong the oar;

Haste.. haste across the stream!'
Again Lord William heard a cry
Like Edmund's drowning scream.

'I heard a child's distressful voice,'
The boatman cried again. 110

⁵ Nay, hasten on . . the night is dark . . And we should search in vain.'

'O God! Lord William, dost thou know How dreadful 'tis to die? And canst thou without pity hear A child's expiring cry?

'How horrible it is to sink
Beneath the closing stream,
To stretch the powerless arms in vain,
In vain for help to scream!'

The shrick again was heard: it came More deep, more piercing loud; That instant o'er the flood the moon Shone through a broken cloud;

And near them they beheld a child;
Upon a crag he stood,

A little crag, and all around Was spread the rising flood.

The boatman plied the oar, the boat
Approach'd his resting place; 130
The moon-beam shone upon the child,
And show'd how pale his face.

'Now reach thine hand!' the boatman cried,

'Lord William, reach and save!'
The child stretch'd forth his little hands
To grasp the hand he gave.

Then William shriek'd; the hands he felt

Were cold and damp and dead! He held young Edmund in his arms A heavier weight than lead. 140

The boat sunk down, the murderer sunk Beneath the avenging stream; He rose, he shriek'd, no human car Heard William's drowning scream.

Westbury, 1798.

THE WELL OF ST. KEYNE

[First published in The Morning Post, Dec. 3, 1798; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

'I know not whether it be worth the reporting, that there is in Cornwall, near the parish of St. Neots, a Well, arched over with the robes of four kinds of trees, withy, oak, elm, and ash, dedicated to St. Keyne. The reported virtue of the water is this, that whether husband or wife come first to drink thereof, they get the mastery thereby.'— Fuller.

This passage in one of the folios of the Worthy old Fuller, who, as he says, knew not whether it were worth the reporting, suggested the following Ballad: and the Ballad has produced so many imitations that it may be prudent here thus to assert its originality, lest I should be accused hereafter of having committed the plagiarism which has been practised upon it.

A Well there is in the west country, And a clearer one never was seen; There is not a wife in the west country But has heard of the well of St. Keyne.

An oak and an elm-tree stand beside, And behind doth an ash-tree grow, And a willow from the bank above Droops to the water below. A traveller came to the Well of St. Keyne;
Joyfully he drew nigh, 10

For from cock-crow he had been travelling,

And there was not a cloud in the sky.

He drank of the water so cool and clear, For thirsty and hot was he,

And he sat down upon the bank
Under the willow-tree.

There came a man from the house hard by
At the Well to fill his pail;
On the Well-side he rested it,
And he bade the Stranger hail.

Now art thou a bachelor, Stranger?' quoth he,

'For an if thou hast a wife, The happiest draught thou hast drank this day

That ever thou didst in thy life.

'Or has thy good woman, if one thou hast,

Ever here in Cornwall been?

For an if she have, I'll venture my life

She has drank of the Well of St. Keyne.'

'I have left a good woman who never was here,'

The Stranger he made reply, 30

But that my draught should be the better for that,

I pray you answer me why?'

'St. Keyne,' quoth the Cornish-man,
'many a time
Drank of this crystal Well,
And before the Angel summon'd her,
She laid on the water a spell.

'If the Husband of this gifted Well Shall drink before his Wife, A happy man thenceforth is he,

A happy man thenceforth is he, For he shall be Master for life. 'But if the Wife should drink of it first,...
God help the Husband then!'

The Stranger stoopt to the Well of St. Keyne.

And drank of the water again.

'You drank of the Well I warrant betimes?'

He to the Cornish-man said:

But the Cornish-man smiled as the Stranger spake,

And sheepishly shook his head.

'I hasten'd as soon as the wedding was done,

And left my Wife in the porch; 50 But i' faith she had been wiser than me, For she took a bottle to Church.'

Westbury, 1798.

THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM

[First published in The Morning Post, August 9, 1798; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1800, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

1

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun,
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

2

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round,
Which he beside the rivulet
In playing there had found; 10
He came to ask what he had found,
That was so large, and smooth, and round.

3

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
And, with a natural sigh,
''Tis some poor fellow's skull,' said he,

'Who fell in the great victory.

Away they sent the sacrament,
The fit it left her weak,
She look'd at her children with ghastly

And faintly struggled to speak.

'All kind of sin I have rioted in,
And the judgement now must be,
But I secured my children's souls,
Oh! pray, my children, for me!

f I have 'nointed myself with infant's fat,
The fiends have been my slaves, 30
From sleeping babes I have suck'd the
breath,

And breaking by charms the sleep of death,

I have call'd the dead from their graves.

f And the Devil will fetch me now in fire, My witchcrafts to atone:

And I who have troubled the dead man's grave

Shall never have rest in my own.

Bless, I entreat, my winding sheet,
 My children, I beg of you;
 And with holy water sprinkle my shroud,
 And sprinkle my coffin too.

'And let me be chain'd in my coffin of stone,

And fasten it strong, I implore, With iron bars, and with three chains, Chain it to the church floor.

'And bless the chains and sprinkle them, And let fifty Priests stand round, Who night and day the mass may say Where I lie on the ground.

'And see that fifty Choristers 50
Beside the bier attend me,
And day and night by the tapers' light,
With holy hymns defend me.

'Let the church bells all, both great and small,

Be toll'd by night and day,

To drive from thence the fiends who come

To bear my body away.

'And ever have the church door barr'd After the even-song;

And I beseech you, children dear,

Let the bars and bolts be strong.

'And let this be three days and nights My wretched corpse to save; Till the fourth morning keep me safe,

And then I may rest in my grave.

The Old Woman of Berkeley laid her down,

And her eyes grew deadly dim, Short came her breath, and the struggle of death

Did loosen every limb.

They blest the old woman's winding sheet 70

With rites and prayers due,

With holy water they sprinkled her shroud,

And they sprinkled her coffin too.

And they chain'd her in her coffin of stone,

And with iron barr'd it down,
And in the church with three strong
chains

They chain'd it to the ground.

And they blest the chains and sprinkled them,

And fifty Priests stood round, By night and day the mass to say so Where she lay on the ground.

And fifty sacred Choristers

Beside the bier attend her,

Who day and night by the tapers' light

Should with holy hymns defend her.

To see the Priests and Choristers
It was a goodly sight,
Each holding, as it were a staff.

Each holding, as it were a staff, A taper burning bright.

And the church bells all, both great and small, 90

Did toll so loud and long;

And they have barr'd the church door hard,

After the even-song.

And the first night the tapers' light Burnt steadily and clear, But they without a hideous rout Of angry fiends could hear;

A hideous roar at the church door Like a long thunder peal;

And the Priests they pray'd, and the Choristers sung 100
Louder in fearful zeal.

Loud toll'd the bell, the Priests pray'd well,

The tapers they burnt bright,
The Monk her son, and her daughter the
Nun,

They told their beads all night.

The cock he crew, the Fiends they flew
From the voice of the morning away;
Then undisturb'd the Choristers sing,
And the fifty Priests they pray;

As they had sung and pray'd all night, They pray'd and sung all day.

The second night the tapers' light Burnt dismally and blue,

And every one saw his neighbour's face Like a dead man's face to view.

And yells and cries without arise
That the stoutest heart might shock,
And a deafening roaring like a cataract
pouring

Over a mountain rock.

The Monk and Nun they told their beads 120

As fast as they could tell,

And aye as louder grew the noise The faster went the bell.

Louder and louder the Choristers sung As they trembled more and more,

And the Priests as they pray'd to heaven for aid,

They smote their breasts full sore.

The cock he crew, the Fiends they flew From the voice of the morning away; Then undisturb'd the Choristers sing, 130

And the fifty Priests they pray; As they had sung and pray'd all night, They pray'd and sung all day.

The third night came, and the tapers' flame

A frightful stench did make; And they burnt as though they had been dipt

In the burning brimstone lake.

And the loud commotion, like the rushing of ocean,

Grew momently more and more;
And strokes as of a battering ram
140
Did shake the strong church door.

The bellmen, they for very fear Could toll the bell no longer; And still as louder grew the strokes Their fear it grew the stronger.

The Monk and Nun forgot their beads,
They fell on the ground in dismay;
There was not a single Saint in heaven
To whom they did not pray.

And the Choristers' song, which late was so strong,

Falter'd with consternation,

For the church did rock as an earthquake shock

Uplifted its foundation.

And a sound was heard like the trumpet's blast.

That shall one day wake the dead; The strong church door could bear no more.

And the bolts and the bars they fled;

And the tapers' light was extinguish'd quite.

And the choristers faintly sung, And the Priests dismay'd, panted and pray'd, 160

And on all Saints in heaven for aid They call'd with trembling tongue.

And in He came with eyes of flame, The Devil to fetch the dead.

And all the church with his presence glow'd

Like a fiery furnace red.

He laid his hand on the iron chains. And like flax they moulder'd asunder, And the coffin lid, which was barr'd so

He burst with his voice of thunder.

And he bade the Old Woman of Berkeley rise.

And come with her Master away : A cold sweat started on that cold corpse, At the voice she was forced to obev.

She rose on her feet in her winding sheet, Her dead flesh quiver'd with fear,

And a groan like that which the Old Woman gave

Never did mortal hear.

She follow'd her Master to the church door.

There stood a black horse there; 180 His breath was red like furnace smoke, His eyes like a meteor's glare.

The Devil he flung her on the horse, And he leapt up before, went. And away like the lightning's speed they And she was seen no more.

They saw her no more, but her cries For four miles round they could hear, And children at rest at their mothers' breast

Started, and scream'd with fear. 100 Hereford, 1798.

GOD'S JUDGEMENT ON A WICKED BISHOP

[First published in The Morning Post, Nov. 27, 1799; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1800, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

'Here followeth the History of HATTO,

Archbichop of Mentz.

'It happed in the year 914, that there was an exceeding great famine in Germany, at what time Otho, surnamed the Great, was Emperor, and one Hatto, once Abbot of Fulda, was Archbishop of Mentz, of the Bishops after Crescens and Crescentius the two and thirtieth, of the Archbishops after St. Bonifacius the thirteenth. This Hatto, in the time of this great famine afore-mentioned, when he saw the poor people of the country exceedingly oppressed with famine, assembled a great company of them together into a Barne, and, like a most accursed and mercilesse caitiffe, burnt up those poor innocent souls, that were so far from doubting any such matter, that they rather hoped to receive some comfort and relief at his hands. The reason that moved the prelat to commit that execrable impiety was, because he thought the famine would the sooner cease, if those unprofitable beggars that consumed more bread than they were worthy to eat, were dispatched out of the world. For he said that those poor folks were like to Mice, that were good for nothing but to devour corne. But God Almighty, the just avenger of the poor folks quarrel, did not long suffer this hainous tyranny, this most detestable fact, unpunished. For he mustered up an army of Mice against the Archbishop, and sent them to persecute him as his furious Alastors, so that they afflicted him both day and night, and would not suffer him to take his rest in any place. Whereupon the Prelate, thinking that he should be secure from the injury of Mice if he were in a certain tower, that standeth in the Rhine near to the towne, betook himself unto the said tower as to a safe refuge and

sanctuary from his enemies, and locked himself in. But the innumerable troupes of Mice chased him continually very eagerly, and swumme unto him upon the top of the water to execute the just judgment of God, and so at last he was most miserably devoured by those sillie creatures; who pursued him with such bitter hostility, that it is recorded they scraped and knawed out his very name from the walls and tapistry wherein it was written, after they had so cruelly devoured his body. Wherefore the tower wherein he was eaten up by the Mice is shewn to this day, for a perpetual monument to all succeeding ages of the barbarous and inhuman tyranny of this impious Prelate, being situate in a little green Island in the midst of the Rhine near to the towne of Bingen, and is commonly called in the German Tongue the Mowse-TURN.'-Coryat's Crudities, pp. 571, 572.

Other authors who record this tale say that the Bishop was eaten by Rats.

THE summer and autumn had been so wet,

That in winter the corn was growing yet, Twas a piteous sight to see all around The grain lie rotting on the ground.

Every day the starving poor Crowded around Bishop Hatto's door, For he had a plentiful last-year's store, And all the neighbourhood could tell His granaries were furnish'd well.

At last Bishop Hatto appointed a day ro
To quiet the poor without delay;
He bade them to his great Barn repair,
And they should have food for the winter
there.

Rejoiced such tidings good to hear, The poor folk flock'd from far and near; The great Barn was full as it could hold Of women and children, and young and

Then when he saw it could hold no more, Bishop Hatto he made fast the door; And while for mercy on Christ they call, He set fire to the Barn and burnt them

'I'faith 'tis an excellent bonfire!'
quoth he,

'And the country is greatly obliged to me.

For ridding it in these times forlorn Of Rats that only consume the corn.'

So then to his palace returned he,
And he sat down to supper merrily,
And he slept that night like an innocent
man;

But Bishop Hatto never slept again.

In the morning as he enter'd the hall 30 Where his picture hung against the wall, A sweat like death all over him came, For the Rats had eaten it out of the frame.

As he look'd there came a man from his farm—

He had a countenance white with alarm; 'My Lord, I open'd your granaries this morn,

And the Rats had eaten all your corn.'

Another came running presently,
And he was pale as pale could be,
'Fly! my Lord Bishop, fly,' quoth he,
'Ten thousand Rats are coming this
way,...

4r
The Lord forgive you for yesterday!'

'I'll go to my tower on the Rhine,' replied he,

''Tis the safest place in Germany;
The walls are high and the shores are
steep.

And the stream is strong and the water deep.'

Bishop Hatto fearfully hasten'd away, And he crost the Rhine without delay, And reach'd his tower, and barr'd with care

All the windows, doors, and loop-holes there.

He laid him down and closed his eyes;... But soon a scream made him arise, He started and saw two eyes of flame On his pillow from whence the screaming came.

He listen'd and look'd; ... it was only the Cat;

But the Bishop he grew more fearful for that.

For she sat screaming, mad with fear At the Army of Rats that were drawing near.

For they have swum over the river so deep,

And they have climb'd the shores so steep, 60

And up the Tower their way is bent, To do the work for which they were sent.

They are not to be told by the dozen or score.

By thousands they come, and by myriads and more,

Such numbers had never been heard of before,

Such a judgement had never been witness'd of yore.

Down on his knees the Bishop fell, And faster and faster his beads did he tell,

As louder and louder drawing near 69 The gnawing of their teeth he could hear.

And in at the windows and in at the door.

And through the walls helter-skelter they pour,

And down from the ceiling and up through the floor,

From the right and the left, from behind and before,

From within and without, from above and below.

And all at once to the Bishop they go.

They have whetted their teeth against the stones,

And now they pick the Bishop's bones; They gnaw'd the flesh from every limb, For they were sent to do judgement on him!

Westbury, 1799.

THE INCHCAPE ROCK

[First published in *The Morning Post*, Oct. 19, 1803. The Ballad was reprinted, with a number of unauthorized variations, in *The Edinburgh Annual Register* for 1810, without Southey's knowledge or consent.]

An old writer mentions a curious tradition which may be worth quoting. 'By east the Isle of May,' says he, 'welve miles from all land in the German seas, lyes a great hidden rock, called Inchcape, very dangerous for navigators, because it is overflowed everie tide. It is reported in old times, upon the saide rock there was a bell, fixed upon a tree or timber, which rang continually, being moved by thesea, giving notice to the saylers of the danger. This bell or clocke was put there and maintained by the Abbot of Aberbrothok, and being taken down by a sea pirate, a yeare therafter he perished upon the same rocke, with ship and goodes, in the righteous judgement of God.'—Stoddard, Remarks on Scotland.

No stir in the air, no stir in the sea, The ship was still as she could be,

Her sails from heaven received no motion,

Her keel was steady in the ocean.

Without either sign or sound of their shock

The waves flow'd over the Inchcape Rock;

So little they rose, so little they fell, They did not move the Incheape Bell.

The Abbot of Aberbrothok

Had placed that bell on the Inchcape Rock;

On a buoy in the storm it floated and swung,

And over the waves its warning rung.

When the Rock was hid by the surge's swell.

The mariners heard the warning bell;
And then they knew the perilous
Rock.

And blest the Abbot of Aberbrothok.

The Sun in heaven was shining gay,
All things were joyful on that day;
The sea-birds scream'd as they wheel'd
round,
19

And there was joyaunce in their sound.

The buoy of the Inchcape Bell was seen

A darker speck on the ocean green; Sir Ralph the Rover walk'd his deck, And he fixed his eye on the darker speck.

He felt the cheering power of spring,
It made him whistle, it made him
sing;

His heart was mirthful to excess, But the Rover's mirth was wickedness.

His eye was on the Inchcape float; Quoth he, 'My men, put out the boat, 30

And row me to the Incheape Rock,
And I'll plague the Abbot of Aberbrothok.'

The boat is lower'd, the boatmen row,
And to the Inchcape Rock they go;
Sir Ralph bent over from the boat,
And he cut the Bell from the Inchcape
float.

Down sunk the Bell with a gurgling sound,

The bubbles rose and burst around; Quoth Sir Ralph, 'The next who comes to the Rock 39

Won't bless the Abbot of Aberbrothok.'

Sir Ralph the Rover sail'd away, He scour'd the seas for many a day; And now grown rich with plunder'd store,

He steers his course for Scotland's shore.

So thick a haze o'erspreads the sky They cannot see the Sun on high; The wind hath blown a gale all day, At evening it hath died away.

On the deck the Rover takes his stand, So dark it is they see no land. 50 Quoth Sir Ralph, 'It will be lighter soon,

For there is the dawn of the rising Moon.'

'Canst hear,' said one, 'the breakers roar?

For methinks we should be near the shore.'

'Now where we are I cannot tell,

But I wish I could hear the Incheape Bell.'

They hear no sound, the swell is strong; Though the wind hath fallen they drift along,

Till the vessel strikes with a shivering shock.—

'Oh Christ! it is the Inchcape Rock!'

Sir Ralph the Rover tore his hair; 61 He curst himself in his despair; The waves rush in on every side, The ship is sinking beneath the tide.

But even in his dying fear One dreadful sound could the Rover hear,

A sound as if with the Inchcape Bell, The Devil below was ringing his knell.

Bristol, 1802.

QUEEN ORRACA

AND

THE FIVE MARTYRS OF MOROCCO

[First published in The Morning Post, Sept. 1, 1803. Afterwards published in The Edinburgh Annual Register for 1808, and in Ballantyne's English Minstrelsy, 1810.]

This Legend is related in the Chronicle of Affonso II, and in the Historia Serafica of Fr. Manoel da Esperança.

1

THE Friars five have girt their loins, And taken staff in hand; And never shall those Friars again Hear mass in Christian land.

They went to Queen Orraca,
To thank her and bless her then;
And Queen Orraca in tears
Knelt to the holy men.

- 'Three things, Queen Orraca,
 We prophesy to you:
 Hear us, in the name of God!
 For time will prove them true.
- 'In Morocco we must martyr'd be; Christ hath vouchsafed it thus: We shall shed our blood for Him Who shed his blood for us.
- 'To Coimbra shall our bodies be brought, Such being the will divine; That Christians may behold and feel Blessings at our shrine.
- 'And when unto that place of rest Our bodies shall draw nigh, Who sees us first, the King or you, That one that night must die.
- 'Fare thee well, Queen Orraca!
 For thy soul a mass we will say,
 Every day as long as we live,
 And on thy dying day.'

The Friars they blest her, one by one,
Where she knelt on her knee,
And they departed to the land
Of the Moors beyond the sea.

2

'What news, O King Affonso,
What news of the Friars five?
Have they preach'd to the Miramamolin;
And are they still alive?'

'They have fought the fight, O Queen! They have run the race; In robes of white they hold the palm

In robes of white they hold the palm
Before the throne of Grace.

4

'All naked in the sun and air Their mangled bodies lie; What Christian dared to bury them, By the bloody Moors would die.'

3

'What news, O King Affonso,
Of the Martyrs five what news?
Doth the bloody Miramamolin
Their burial still refuse?'

'That on a dunghill they should rot,
The bloody Moor decreed; 50
That their dishonour'd bodies should
The dogs and vultures feed:

'But the thunder of God roll'd over them,

And the lightning of Godflash'd round; Nor thing impure, nor man impure, Could approach the holy ground.

'A thousand miracles appall'd
The cruel Pagan's mind;
Our brother Pedro brings them here,
In Coimbra to be shrined.'

4

Every altar in Coimbra
Is drest for the festival day;
All the people in Coimbra
Are dight in their richest array;

80

90

Every bell in Coimbra
Doth merrily, merrily, ring;
The Clergy and the Knights await,
To go forth with the Queen and the
King.

- 'Come forth, come forth, Queen Orraca!
 We make the procession stay.' 70
 'I beseech thee, King Affonso,
 Go you alone to-day.
- 'I have pain in my head this morning, I am ill at heart also: Go without me, King Affonso, For I am too faint to go.'
- 'The relics of the Martyrs five
 All maladies can cure;
 They will requite the charity
 You show'd them once, be sure:
- 'Come forth then, Queen Orraca!
 You make the procession stay:
 It were a scandal and a sin
 To abide at home to-day.'

Upon her palfrey she is set,
And forward then they go;
And over the long bridge they pass,
And up the long hill wind slow.

- ' Prick forward, King Affonso, And do not wait for me; To meet them close by Coimbra, It were discourtesy;
- 'A little while I needs must wait,

 Till this sore pain be gone; . .

 I will proceed the best I can,

 But do you and your Knights prick
 on.'

The King and his Knights prick'd up the hill

Faster than before;
The King and his Knights have topt the hill,

And now they are seen no more. 100 l

As the King and his Knights went down the hill

A wild boar crost the way;

- 'Follow him! follow him!' cried the King;
 - 'We have time by the Queen's delay!'

A-hunting of the boar astray
Is King Affonso gone:
Slowly, slowly, but straight the while,
Queen Orraca is coming on.

And winding now the train appears

Between the olive-trees:

Queen Orraca alighted then,

And fell upon her knees.

The Friars of Alanquer came first,
And next the relics past;...

Queen Orraca look'd to see
The King and his Knights come last.

She heard the horses tramp behind;
At that she turn'd her face:
King Affonso and his Knights came up
All panting from the chase.

'Have pity upon my poor soul, Holy Martyrs five!' cried she: 'Holy Mary, Mother of God, Virgin, pray for me!'

5

That day in Coimbra
Many a heart was gay;
But the heaviest heart in Coimbra,
Was that poor Queen's that day.

The festival is over,

The sun hath sunk in the west;

All the people in Coimbra

Have betaken themselves to rest.

Queen Orraca's Father Confessor At midnight is awake; Kneeling at the Martyr's shrine, And praying for her sake. 140

Just at the midnight hour, when all
Was still as still could be,
Into the Church of Santa Cruz,
Came a saintly company:

All in robes of russet grey,
Poorly were they dight;
Each one girdled with a cord,
Like a Friar Minorite.

But from those robes of russet grey, There flow'd a heavenly light; For each one was the blessed soul Of a Friar Minorite.

Brighter than their brethren,
Among the beautiful band;
Five were there who each did bear
A palm branch in his hand.

He who led the brethren,
A living man was he;
And yet he shone the brightest
Of all the company.

Before the steps of the altar,
Each one bow'd his head;
And then with solemn voice they sung
The Service of the Dead.

'And who are ye, ye blessed Saints?'
The Father Confessor said;

'And for what happy soul sing ye The Service of the Dead?'

These are the souls of our brethren in bliss,

The Martyrs five are we:
And this is our father Francisco,
Among us bodily!

'We are come hither to perform
Our promise to the Queen;
Go thou to King Affonso,
And say what thou hast seen.'

There was loud knocking at the door,
As the heavenly vision fled;
And the porter called to the Confessor,
To tell him the Queen was dead.

Bristol, 1803.

BROUGH BELLS

'The church at Brough is a pretty large handsome ancient building. The steeple is not so old, having been built about the year 1513, under the direction of Thomas Blenkinsop, of Helbeck, Esq. There are in it four excellent bells, by much the largest in the county, except the great bell at Kirkby Thore. Concerning these bells at Brough, there is a tradition that they were given by one Brunskill, who lived upon Stanemore, in the remotest part of the parish, and had a great many cattle. One time it happened that his Bull fell a bellowing, which in the dialect of the country is called cruning, this being the genuine Saxon word to denote that vociferation. Thereupon he said to one of his neighbours, "Hearest thou how loud this bull crunes? If these cattle should all crune together, might they not be heard from Brough hither?" He answered, "Yea." "Well, then," says Brunskill, "I'll make them all crune together." And he sold them all, and with the price thereof he bought the said bells (or perhaps he might get the old bells new cast and made larger). There is a monument in the body of the church, in the south wall, between the highest and second window, and in which it is said the said Brunskill was the last that was interred.'-Nicolson and Burn's History and Antiquities of Westmoreland and Cumberland, vol. i, p. 571.

One day to Helbeck I had stroll'd Among the Crossfell hills, And resting in its rocky grove Sat listening to the rills;

The while to their sweet undersong
The birds sang blithe around,
And the soft west wind awoke the wood
To an intermitting sound.

Louder or fainter as it rose,
Or died away, was borne ro
The harmony of merry bells,
From Brough that pleasant morn.

'Why are the merry bells of Brough, My friend, so few?' said I, 'They disappoint the expectant ear, Which they should gratify.

- 'One, two, three, four; one, two, three, four;
- 'Tis still one, two, three, four.

 Mellow and silvery are the tones;

 But I wish the bells were more!'
- 'What! art thou critical?' quoth he; 'Eschew that heart's disease That seeketh for displeasure where The intent hath been to please.
- 'By those four bells there hangs a tale, Which being told, I guess, Will make thee hear their scanty peal With proper thankfulness.
- 'Not by the Cliffords were they given, Nor by the Tuftons' line; 30 Thou hearest in that peal the crune Of old John Brunskill's kine.
- 'On Stanemore's side one summer eve, John Brunskill sate to see His herds in yonder Borrodale Come winding up the lea.
- 'Behind them on the lowland's verge, In the evening light serene, Brough's silent tower, then newly built By Blenkinsop, was seen.
- 'Slowly they came in long array,
 With loitering pace at will;
 At times a low from them was heard,
 Far off, for all was still.
- 'The hills return'd that lonely sound
 Upon the tranquil air;
 The only sound it was, which then
 Awoke the echoes there.
- "Thou hear'st that lordly Bull of mine,
- Neighbour," quoth Brunskill then; 50 "How loudly to the hills he crunes, That crune to him again.

- "Think'st thou if you whole herd at once
- Their voices should combine, Were they at Brough, that we might not Hear plainly from this upland spot That cruning of the kine?"
- "That were a crune, indeed,' replied
 His comrade, "which, I ween,
 Might at the Spital well be heard,
 And in all dales between.
- "" Up Mallerstang to Eden's springs The eastern wind upon its wings The mighty voice would bear; And Appleby would hear the sound, Methinks, when skies are fair."
- "Then shall the herd," John Brunskill cried,
- "From you dumb steeple crune, And thou and I, on this hill-side, Will listen to their tune.
- '"So while the merry Bells of Brough For many an age ring on, John Brunskill will remember'd be, When he is dead and gone;
- "As one who in his latter years, Contented with enough, Gave freely what he well could spare To buy the Bells of Brough."
- 'Thus it hath proved: three hundred years

R۵

- Since then have pass'd away, And Brunskill's is a living name Among us to this day.'
- 'More pleasure,' I replied, 'shall I From this time forth partake, When I remember Helbeck woods, For old John Brunskill's sake.
- 'He knew how wholesome it would be, Among these wild wide fells, And upland vales, to catch, at times, The sound of Christian bells;

- 'What feelings and what impulses
 Their cadence might convey,
 To herdsman or to shepherd boy,
 Whiling in indolent employ
 The solitary day;
- 'That when his brethren were convened To meet for social prayer, He, too, admonish'd by the call, In spirit might be there.
- 'Or when a glad thanksgiving sound, 100 Upon the winds of Heaven, Was sent to speak a Nation's joy, For some great blessing given—
- ' For victory by sea or land, And happy peace at length; Peace by his country's valour won, And 'stablish'd by her strength;
- 'When such exultant peals were borne
 Upon the mountain air,
 The sound should stir his blood, and
 give 110
 An English impulse there.'

Such thoughts were in the old man's mind,

When he that eve look'd down From Stanemore's side on Borrodale, And on the distant town.

And had I store of wealth, methinks, Another herd of kine, John Brunskill, I would freely give, That they might crune with thine. Keswick, 1828.

INSCRIPTION FOR A COFFEE-POT

[Printed in a note in Selections, From the Letters of Robert Southey, ed. J. W. Warter, vol. iv, pp. 203, 204.]

A GOLDEN medal was voted to me
By a certain Royal Society:
'Twas not a thing at which to scoff,
For fifty guineas was the cost thereof:
On one side a head of the king you
might see,

And on the other was Mercury!
But I was scant of worldly riches,
And moreover the Mercury had no
breeches:

So, thinking of honour and utility too,

And having modesty also in view, 10 I sold this medal, (why should I not?) And with the money which for it I got,

I purchased this silver coffee-pot: Which I trust my son will preserve with care,

To be handed down from heir to heir. These verses are engraven here, That the truth of the matter may

That the truth of the matter may appear,

And I hope the society will be so wise,

As in future to dress their Mercuries!

SONNETS

[As two of the Sonnets have been inserted among the Selected Minor Poems (pp. 349, 350), and three of those published in 1837–1838 have been omitted, it has been necessary to make some alteration in the numbering of those here printed. Where this has been done the number in brackets () at the head of a sonnet denotes its number in the edition of 1837–1838.

Of the Sonnets printed below, numbers I to IV inclusive (as numbered in the present edition) were published in *Poems*, 1797; the remainder were published in *Metrical Tales*, 1805. Sonnets V, VI, VII,

Metrical Tales, 1805. Sonnets V, VI, VII, VIII, and XII were included in The Annual Anthology, 1799; Sonnets IX, X, XI, XIV, XV, appeared in The Annual Anthology, 1800.1

1000.]

I (IV) CORSTON

As thus I stand beside the murmuring stream

And watch its current, memory here

pourtrays

Scenes faintly form'd of half-forgotten days,

Like far-off woodlands by the moon's bright beam

Dimly descried, but lovely. I have worn

Amid these haunts the heavy hours

When childhood idled through the Sabbath-day;

Risen to my tasks at winter's earliest morn;

And when the summer twilight darken'd here,

Thinking of home, and all of heart for-

Have sigh'd and shed in secret many a tear.

Dream-like and indistinct those days appear,

As the faint sounds of this low brooklet,

Upon the breeze, reach fitfully the ear. 1794.

II (VI)

With many a weary step, at length I gain Thy summit, Lansdown; and the cool breeze plays

Gratefully round my brow, as hence I gaze

Back on the fair expanse of yonder plain. [eve

'Twas a long way and tedious; to the Though fair the extended vale, and fair to view

The autumnal leaves of many a faded

That eddy in the wild gust moaning by. Even so it fared with life: in discontent Restless through Fortune's mingled scenes I went..

Yet wept to think they would return no more.

But cease, fond heart, in such sad thoughts to roam;

For surely thou ere long shalt reach thy home.

And pleasant is the way that lies before.
1794.

III (VII)

FAIR is the rising morn when o'er the sky The orient sun expands his roseate ray, And lovely to the musing poet's eye Fades the soft radiance of departing day; But fairer is the smile of one we love, Than all the scenes in Nature's ample

And sweeter than the music of the grove, The voice that bids us welcome. Such delight.

EDITH! is mine, escaping to thy sight From the cold converse of the indifferent throng:

Too swiftly then toward the silent night, Ye hours of happiness, ye speed along. Whilst I, from all the world's dull cares apart, [heart.

Pour out the feelings of my burthen'd 1794.

IV (VIII)

How darkly o'er you far-off mountain

The gather'd tempest! from that lurid cloud

The deep-voiced thunders roll, aweful and loud

Though distant; while upon the misty

Fast falls in shadowy streaks the pelting I never saw so terrible a storm!

Perhaps some way-worn traveller in

vain Wraps his thin raiment round his shivering form,

Cold even as hope within him. I the while

Pause here in sadness, though the sunbeams smile

Cheerily round me. Ah! that thus my lot [sign'd,

Might be with Peace and Solitude as-Where I might from some little quiet cot Sigh for the crimes and miseries of mankind.

1794.

V (IX)

[First published in The Morning Post, May 29, 1799.]

O THOU sweet Lark, who in the heaven

so high [fully, Twinkling thy wings dost sing so joy-I watch thee soaring with a deep delight, And when at last I turn mine aching eye That lags below thee in the Infinite,

Still in my heart receive thy melody. O thou sweet Lark, that I had wings like thee!

Not for the joy it were in you blue light Upward to mount, and from my heavenly height

Gaze on the creeping multitude below; But that I soon would wing my eager flight

To that loved home where Fancy even

Hath fled, and Hope looks onward through a tear. There. Counting the weary hours that hold her 1798.

VI(X)

[First published in The Morning Post, May 21, 1799.]

Thou lingerest, Spring! still wintry is the scene. wear:

The fields their dead and sapless russet Scarce doth the glossy celandine appear Starring the sunny bank, or early green The elder yet its circling tufts put forth. The sparrow tenants still the eaves-built

Where we should see our martin's snowy Oft darting out. The blasts from the bleak north

And from the keener east still frequent Sweet Spring, thou lingerest; and it should be so, . .

Late let the fields and gardens blossom sis drest,

Like man when most with smiles thy face 'Tis to deceive, and he who knows ye best. [doubt.

When most ye promise, ever most must Westbury, 1799.

VII (XI)

[First published in The Morning Post, November 23, 1798.]

Beware a speedy friend, the Arabian said,

And wisely was it he advised distrust: The flower that blossoms earliest fades the first.

Look at you Oak that lifts its stately And dallies with the autumnal storm, [it rose. whose rage

Tempests the great sea-waves; slowly Slowly its strength increased through many an age,

And timidly did its light leaves disclose, As doubtful of the spring, their palest

They to the summer cautiously expand. And by the warmer sun and season

Matured, their foliage in the grove is seen, When the bare forest by the wintry blast Is swept, still lingering on the boughs the last.

1798.

VIII (XII) TO A GOOSE

[First published in The Morning Post, January 10, 1799.]

If thou didst feed on western plains of yore:

Or waddle wide with flat and flabby feet Over some Cambrian mountain's plashy

Or find in farmer's yard a safe retreat From gipsy thieves, and foxes sly and

If thy grey quills, by lawyer guided, Deeds big with ruin to some wretched sweet.

Or love-sick poet's sonnet, sad and Wailing the rigour of his lady fair: Or if, the drudge of housemaid's daily

Cobwebs and dust thy pinions white besoil.

Departed Goose! I neither know nor But this I know, that we pronounced thee fine.

Season'd with sage and onions, and port London, 1798.

IX (XIII)

I MARVEL not, O Sun! that unto thee In adoration man should bow the knee, And pour his prayers of mingled awe and love:

For like a God thou art, and on thy way Of glory sheddest with benignant ray, Beauty, and life, and joyance from

above. fshroud. No longer let these mists thy radiance These cold raw mists that chill the com-

fortless day: But shed thy splendour through the

opening cloud And cheer the earth once more. The

languid flowers Lie scentless, beaten down with heavy

rain : Earth asks thy presence, saturate with showers:

O Lord of Light! put forth thy beams again, fhours.

For damp and cheerless are the gloomy

Westbury, 1798.

X (XIV)

[First published in The Morning Post, December 28, 1798.]

FAIR be thy fortunes in the distant land. Companion of my earlier years and

friend! Go to the Eastern world, and may the hand send.

Of Heaven its blessing on thy labour And may I, if we ever more should meet. See thee with affluence to thy native shore

greet Return'd:.. I need not pray that I may The same untainted goodness as before. Long years must intervene before that

day;

And what the changes Heaven to each may send. It boots not now to bode: O early

friend!

Assured, no distance e'er can wear away Esteem long rooted, and no change The dear remembrance of the friend we

1798.

XI (XVI)

[First published in The Morning Post, August 26, 1799.]

PORLOCK, thy verdant vale so fair to sight,

Thy lofty hills which forn and furze embrown.

The waters that roll musically down Thy woody glens, the traveller with delight grey

Recalls to memory, and the channel Circling its surges in thy level bay.

Porlock, I also shall forget thee not, Here by the unwelcome summer rain confined;

But often shall hereafter call to mind How here, a patient prisoner, 'twas my lot

To wear the lonely, lingering close of day, Making my Sonnet by the alchouse fire, Whilst Idleness and Solitude inspire Dull rhymes to pass the duller hours

away.

August 9, 1799.

XII (XVII)

[First published in The Morning Post, December 14, 1798.]

STATELY yon vessel sails adown the tide, To some far distant land adventurous bound;

The sailors' busy cries from side to side Pealing among the echoing rocks resound:

A patient, thoughtless, much-enduring band,

Joyful they enter on their ocean way, With shouts exulting leave their native land, [day.

And know no care beyond the present But is there no poor mourner left behind, Who sorrows for a child or husband there?

Who at the howling of the midnight
wind [prayer?
Will wake and tromble in her beding

Will wake and tremble in her boding So may her voice be heard, and Heaven be kind! [fair!

Go, gallant Ship, and be thy fortune Westbury, 1799.

XIII (XVIII)

[First published in The Morning Post, December 1, 1798.]

O Gop! have mercy in this dreadful hour

On the poor mariner! in comfort here Safe sheltered as I am, I almost fear The blast that rages with resistless

power. [waves, What were it now to toss upon the The madden'd waves, and know no

succour near;
The howling of the storm alone to hear,
And the wild sea that to the tempest
rayes:

To gaze amid the horrors of the night And only see the billow's gleaming light; Then in the dread of death to think of

her ri Who, as she listens sleepless to the gale, Puts up a silent prayer and waxes pale?..

O God! have mercy on the mariner! Westbury, 1799.

XIV (XIX)

[First published in The Morning Post, August 9, 1799.]

SHE comes majestic with her swelling sails, [way

The gallant Ship; along her watery Homeward she drives before the favouring gales;

Now flirting at their length the streamers play, [breeze.

And now they ripple with the ruffling Hark to the sailors' shouts! the rocks rebound, [sound.

Thundering in echoes to the joyful Long have they voyaged o'er the distant seas, [last,

And what a heart-delight they feel at So many toils, so many dangers past, to To view the port desired, he only knows Who on the stormy deep for many a day Hath tost, aweary of his watery way,

And watch'd, all anxious, every wind that blows.

Westbury, 1799.

XV (XX)

FAREWELL my home, my home no longer now,

Witness of many a calm and happy day;
And thou fair eminence, upon whose
brow

Dwells the last sunshine of the evening Farewell! These eyes no longer shall pursue

The western sun beyond the farthest height, [light. When slowly he forsakes the fields of No more the freshness of the falling dew, Cool and delightful, here shall bathe my

head,
As from this western window dear, I
lean, 10

Listening, the while I watch the placid scene, [shed. The martins twittering underneath the

Farewell, dear home! where many a day has past

In joys whose loved remembrance long shall last.

Westbury, 1799.

LYRIC POEMS

TO CONTEMPLATION

[Published in Poems, 1797.]

Καὶ παγᾶς φιλ έοι μι τὸν ἐγγύθεν ἢχον ἀκούειν, *Α τέρπει ψοφέοισα τὸν ἀγρικόν, οὐχὶ ταράσσει. Μοschus.

FAINT gleams the evening radiance through the sky,

The sober twilight dimly darkens round;

In short quick circles the shrill bat flits by, [ground. And the slow vapour curls along the

Now the pleased eye from yon lone cot-

On the green mead the smoke longshadowing play; [spray

The Red-breast on the blossom'd Warbles wild her latest lay;

And lo! the Rooks to you high-tufted trees

Wing in long files vociferous their way.

Calm Contemplation, 'tis thy favourite hour!

Come, tranquillizing Power!

I view thee on the calmy shore When Ocean stills his waves to rest; Or when slow-moving on the surges hoar

Meet with deep hollow roar And whiten o'er his breast:

And when the Moon with softer radiance gleams, [beams.

And lovelier heave the billows in her

When the low gales of evening moan

along, 20
I love with thee to feel the calm cool

breeze, [among, And roam the pathless forest wilds Listening the mellow murmur of the trees [on high,

Full-foliaged, as they wave their heads And to the winds respond in symphony. Or lead me where amid the tranquil vale

The broken streamlet flows in silver light:

And I will linger where the

O'er the bank of violets sighs, Listening to hear its soften'd sounds arise:

And hearken the dull beetle's drowsy flight,

And watch'd the tube-eyed snail

Creep o'er his long moon-glittering trail.

And mark where radiant through the night

Shines in the grass-green hedge the glowworm's living light.

Thee, meekest Power! I love to meet,

As oft with solitary pace
The ruin'd Abbey's hallowed rounds
I trace,

And listen to the echoings of my feet.

Or on some half-demolish'd tomb, Whose warning texts anticipate my doom, 41

Mark the clear orb of night Cast through the ivy'd arch a broken light.

Nor will I not in some more gloomy

Invoke with fearless awe thine holier power.

Wandering beneath the sacred pile

When the blast moans along the darksome aisle,

And clattering patters all around

The midnight shower with dreary sound.

But sweeter 'tis to wander wild 50 By melancholy dreams beguiled, While the summer moon's pale ray Faintly guides me on my way To some lone romantic glen Far from all the haunts of men; Where no noise of uproar rude Breaks the calm of solitude; But soothing Silence sleeps in all, Save the neighbouring waterfall, Whose hoarse waters falling near 60 Load with hollow sounds the ear, And with down-dasht torrent white Gleam hoary through the shades of night.

Thus wandering silent on and slow, I'll nurse Reflection's sacred woe, And muse upon the happier day When Hope would weave her visions

Ere Fancy, chill'd by adverse fate, Left sad Reality my mate.

O CONTEMPLATION! when to Memory's eyes 70
The visions of the long-past days

arise,
Thy holy power imparts the best relief,
And the calm'd Spirit loves the joy of
grief.

Bristol, 1792.

REMEMBRANCE

[First published in The Morning Post, May 26, 1798; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799.]

The remembrance of Youth is a sigh.

ALI.

Man hath a weary pilgrimage
As through the world he wends,
On every stage from youth to age
Still discontent attends;
With heaviness he casts his eye
Upon the road before,
And still remembers with a sigh
The days that are no more.

To school the little exile goes,
Torn from his mother's arms, . . 10
What then shall soothe his earliest
wees.

When novelty hath lost its charms? Condemn'd to suffer through the day Restraints which no rewards repay, And cares where love has no concern, Hope lengthens as she counts the hours Before his wish'd return.

From hard controul and tyrant rules,
The unfeeling discipline of schools,
In thought he loves to roam,
And tears will struggle in his eye
While he remembers with a sigh

Youth comes; the toils and cares of life Torment the restless mind; Where shall the tired and harass'd heart

The comforts of his home.

Its consolation find?
Then is not Youth, as Fancy tells,
Life's summer prime of joy?
Ah no! for hopes too long delay'd 30
And feelings blasted or betray'd,
Its fabled bliss destroy;
And Youth remembers with a sigh
The careless days of Infancy.

Maturer Manhood now arrives,
And other thoughts come on,
But with the baseless hopes of Youth
Its generous warmth is gone;
Cold calculating cares succeed,
The timid thought, the wary deed, 40
The dull realities of truth;
Back on the past he turns his eye,
Remembering with an envious sigh
The happy dreams of Youth.

So reaches he the latter stage
Of this our mortal pilgrimage,
With feeble step and slow;
New ills that latter stage await,
And old Experience learns too late
That all is vanity below.
Life's vain delusions are gone by
Its idle hopes are o'er,
Yet age remembers with a sigh
The days that are no more.

Westbury, 1798.

20

THE WIDOW

SAPPHICS

[Published in Poems, 1797.]

COLD was the night wind, drifting fast the snow fell,

Wide were the downs and shelterless and naked,

When a poor Wanderer struggled on her journey,

Weary and way sore.

Drear were the downs, more dreary her reflections;

Cold was the night-wind, colder was her bosom:

She had no home, the world was all before her,
She had no shelter.

Fast o'er the heath a chariot rattled by

'Pity me!' feebly cried the lonely wanderer;

' Pity me, strangers! lest with cold and hunger Here I should perish.

'Once I had friends,—though now by all forsaken!

Once I had parents,—they are now in Heaven!

I had a home once—I had once a husband— Pity me, strangers!

'I had a home once—I had once a husband—

I am a widow, poor and brokenhearted!

Loud blew the wind, unheard was her complaining,
On drove the chariot.

Then on the snow she laid her down to rest her;

She heard a horseman, 'Pity me!' she groan'd out;
Loud was the wind, unheard was her

Loud was the wind, unheard was her complaining,

On went the horseman.

Worn out with anguish, toil and cold and hunger,

Down sunk the Wanderer, sleep had seized her senses;

There did the traveller find her in the morning:

God had released her.

Bristol, 1795.

THE TRAVELLER'S RETURN

[Published in The Annual Anthology, 1799.]

SWEET to the morning traveller The song amid the sky,

Where twinkling in the dewy light The skylark soars on high.

And cheering to the traveller
The gales that round him play,
When faint and heavily he drags
Along his noon-tide way.

And when beneath the unclouded sun Full wearily toils he,

The flowing water makes to him A soothing melody.

And when the evening light decays, And all is calm around,

There is sweet music to his ear In the distant sheep-bell's sound.

But oh! of all delightful sounds
Of evening or of morn,

The sweetest is the voice of Love, That welcomes his return. Westbury, 1798.

THE OLD MAN'S COMFORTS AND HOW HE GAINED THEM

[First published in The Morning Post, January 17, 1799; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,

The few locks which are left you are grey:

You are hale, Father William, a hearty old man,

Now tell me the reason, I pray.

In the days of my youth, Father William replied,

I remember'd that youth would fly fast.

And abused not my health and my vigour at first,

That I never might need them at last.

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,

And pleasures with youth pass away; And yet you lament not the days that are gone,

Now tell me the reason, I pray.

In the days of my youth, Father William replied,

I remember'd that youth could not last:

I thought of the future, whatever I did, That I never might grieve for the past.

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,

And life must be hastening away; You are cheerful, and love to converse upon death,

Now tell me the reason, I pray. 20

I am cheerful, young man, Father William replied,

Let the cause thy attention engage; In the days of my youth I remember'd my God!

And He hath not forgotten my age. Westbury, 1799.

TO A SPIDER

[First published in The Morning Post, March 23, 1799; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

1

SPIDER! thou need'st not run in fear about

To shun my curious eyes;
I won't humanely crush thy bowels out
Lest thou should'st eat the flies;
Nor will I roast thee with a damn'd
delight

Thy strange instinctive fortitude to see, For there is One who might One day roast me. 9

Thou art welcome to a Rhymer sore perplext,

The subject of his verse; zo There's many a one who on a better text

Perhaps might comment worse.

Then shrink not, old Free-Mason, from my view,

But quietly like me spin out the line;
Do thou thy work pursue
As I will mine.

3

Weaver of snares, thou emblemest the ways

Of Satan, Sire of lies;

Hell's huge black Spider, for mankind he lays

His toils, as thou for flies. 20 When Betty's busy eye runs round the room.

Woe to that nice geometry, if seen!
But where is He whose broom
The earth shall clean?

1

Spider! of old thy flimsy webs were thought,

And 'twas a likeness true,
To emblem laws in which the weak
are caught,

But which the strong break through:
And if a victim in thy toils is ta'en,
Like some poor client is that wretched
fly:

I'll warrant thee thou'lt drain His life-blood dry.

5

And is not thy weak work like human schemes

And care on earth employ'd? Such are young hopes and Love's delightful dreams

So easily destroyed!
So does the Statesman, whilst the
Avengers sleep,

Self-deem'd secure, his wiles in secret lay,

Soon shall destruction sweep His work away.

40

10

6

Thou busy labourer! one resemblance more

May yet the verse prolong, For, Spider, thou art like the Poet poor,

Whom thou hast help'd in song. Both busily our needful food to win, We work, as Nature taught, with

ceaseless pains:
Thy bowels thou dost spin,
I spin my brains.

Westbury, 1798.

THE EBB TIDE

[First published in The Morning Post, June 25, 1799; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

SLOWLY thy flowing tide Came in, old Avon! scarcely did mine eyes,

As watchfully I roam'd thy green-wood side,

Perceive its gentle rise.

With many a stroke and strong
The labouring boatmen upward plied
their oars,
Yet little way they made, though la-

bouring long
Between thy winding shores.

Now down thine ebbing tide The unlabour'd boat falls rapidly along; The solitary helmsman sits to guide, 11

And sings an idle song.

Now o'er the rocks that lay So silent late, the shallow current roars; Fast flow thy waters on their seaward

Through wider-spreading shores.

Avon! I gaze and know
The lesson emblem'd in thy varying way;
It speaks of human joys that rise so slow,
So rapidly decay.

Kingdoms which long have stood, And slow to strength and power attain'd at last.

Thus from the summit of high fortune's flood

They ebb to ruin fast.

Thus like thy flow appears
Time's tardy course to manhood's envied
stage;

Alas! how hurryingly the ebbing years
Then hasten to old age!

Westbury, 1799.

THE COMPLAINTS OF THE POOR

[First published in *The Morning Post*, June 29, 1798; afterwards in *Poems*, vol. ii, 1799.]

And wherefore do the Poor complain?
The Rich Man ask'd of me;..
Come walk abroad with me, I said,
And I will answer thee.

'Twas evening, and the frozen streets Were cheerless to behold, And we were wrapt and coated well, And yet we were a-cold.

We met an old bare-headed man, His locks were thin and white; I ask'd him what he did abroad In that cold winter's night;

The cold was keen indeed, he said,
But at home no fire had he,
And therefore he had come abroad
To ask for charity.

We met a young bare-footed child, And she begg'd loud and bold; I ask'd her what she did abroad When the wind it blew so cold;

She said her father was at home,
And he lay sick a-bed,
And therefore was it she was sent
Abroad to beg for bread.

We saw a woman sitting down
Upon a stone to rest,
She had a baby at her back
And another at her breast;

I ask'd her why she loiter'd there
When the night-wind was so chill; 30
She turn'd her head and bade the child
That scream'd behind, be still;

Then told us that her husband served,
A soldier, far away,
And therefore to her parish she

And therefore to her parish she Was begging back her way.

We met a girl, her dress was loose
And sunken was her eye,
Who with a wanton's hollow voice
Address'd the passers-by;

40

I ask'd her what there was in guilt
That could her heart allure
To shame, disease, and late remorse;
She answer'd she was poor.

I turn'd me to the Rich Man then,
For silently stood he, . .
You ask'd me why the Poor complain.
And these have answer'd thee!

London, 1798.

TO A FRIEND

INQUIRING IF I WOULD LIVE OVER MY
YOUTH AGAIN

[First published in The Morning Post, May 27, 1799; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

1

Do I regret the past?
Would I again live o'er
The morning hours of life?
Nay, William! nay, not so!
In the warm joyance of the summer

I do not wish again The changeful April day. Nay, William! nay, not so! Safe haven'd from the sea, I would not tempt again
The uncertain ocean's wrath.

Praise be to Him who made me what
I am,
Other I would not be.

9

Why is it pleasant then to sit and talk Of days that are no more? When in his own dear home The traveller rests at last,

And tells how often in his wanderings
The thought of those far off
Hath made his eyes o'erflow
With no unmanly tears;
Delighted he recalls

Through what fair scenes his lingering feet have trod; But ever when he tells of perils past

And troubles now no more, His eyes are brightest, and a readier

Flows thankful from his heart.

3

No, William! no, I would not live again

The morning hours of life;

I would not be again

The slave of hope and fear;

I would not learn again

The wisdom by Experience hardly

taught.

To me the past presents
No object for regret;
To me the present gives
All cause for full content.
The future?..it is now the cheerful
noon,

And on the sunny-smiling fields I gaze
With eyes alive to joy;
When the dark night descends,
I willingly shall close my weary lids,
In sure and certain hope to wake again.

Westbury, 1798.

OCCASIONAL PIECES

I

ON A LANDSCAPE OF GASPAR POUSSIN

[Published in Poems, 1797.]

GASPAR! how pleasantly thy pictured scenes

Beguile the lonely hour! I sit and gaze

With lingering eye, till dreaming Fancy makes

The lovely landscape live, and the rapt soul

From the foul haunts of herded humankind

Flies far away with spirit speed, and tastes

The untainted air, that with the lively hue

Of health and happiness illumes the cheek

Of mountain Liberty. My willing soul All eager follows on thy facry flights, to Fancy! best friend; whose blessed witcheries

With cheering prospects cheat the traveller

O'er the long wearying desert of the world.

Nor dost thou, Fancy! with such magic mock

My heart, as, demon-born, old Merlin knew.

Or Alquif, or Zarzafiel's sister sage, Who in her vengeance for so many a vear

Held in the jacinth sepulchre entranced Lisuart the pride of Grecian chivalry.

Friend of my lonely hours! thou leadest me

To such calm joys as Nature, wise and good,

Proffers in vain to all her wretched

Proffers in vain to all her wretched sons, . .

Her wretched sons who pine with want amid

The abundant earth, and blindly bow them down

Before the Moloch shrines of Wealth and Power,

Authors of Evil. Well it is sometimes That thy delusions should beguile the heart,

Sick of reality. The little pile

That tops the summit of that craggy hill

Shall be my dwelling: craggy is the hill And steep; yet through you hazels upward leads 31

The easy path, along whose winding way Now close embower'd I hear the unseen stream

Dash down, anon behold its sparkling foam

Gleam through the thicket; and ascending on

Now pause me to survey the goodly vale

That opens on my prospect. Half way

Pleasant it were upon some broad smooth rock

To sit and sun myself, and look below, And watch the goatherd down you high-

bank path
Urging his flock grotesque; and bidding

His lean rough dog from some near cliff go drive

The straggler; while his barkings loud and quick

Amid their tremulous bleat arising oft, Fainter and fainter from the hollow road

Send their far echoes, till the waterfall, Hoarse bursting from the cavern'd cliff beneath,

Their dying murmurs drown. A little yet

Onward, and I have gain'd the utmost height.

Fair spreads the vale below: I see the stream 50

Stream radiant on beneath the noon-tide sky.

A passing cloud darkens the bordering steep.

Where the town-spires behind the castletowers

Rise graceful; brown the mountain in its shade.

Whose circling grandeur, part by mists conceal'd,

Part with white rocks resplendent in the

Should bound mine eyes, . . ay, and my wishes too,

For I would have no hope or fear beyond.

The empty turmoil of the worthless world,

Its vanities and vices would not vex 60 My quiet heart. The traveller, who beheld

The low tower of the little pile, might deem

It were the house of God; nor would he err

So deeming, for that home would be the home

Of Peace and Love, and they would hallow it

To Him. Oh, life of blessedness! to reap

The fruit of honourable toil, and bound Our wishes with our wants! Delightful thoughts,

That soothe the solitude of weary Hope, Ye leave her to reality awaked, 70 Like the poor captive, from some fleeting

dream
Of friends and liberty and home

restored, Startled, and listening as the midnight

storm

Beats hard and heavy through his dungeon bars.

Bath, 1795.

11

WRITTEN ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1795

[Published in Letters from Spain and Portugal, 1797.]

How many hearts are happy at this hour

In England! Brightly o'er the cheerful hall

Flares the heaped hearth, and friends and kindred meet.

And the glad mother round her festive board

Beholds her children, separated long Amid the wide world's ways, assembled now.

A sight at which affection lightens up With smiles the eye that age has long bedimm'd.

I do remember when I was a child

How my young heart, a stranger then to care, 10

With transport leap'd upon this holy-day,

As o'er the house, all gay with evergreens,

From friend to friend with joyful speed I ran,

Bidding a merry Christmas to them all. Those years are past; their pleasures and their pains

Are now like yonder convent-crested hill That bounds the distant prospect, indistinct,

Yet pictured upon memory's mystic glass

In faint fair hues. A weary traveller now

I journey o'er the desert mountain tracks 20

Of Leon, wilds all drear and comfortless, Where the grey lizards in the noontide

Sport on the rocks, and where the goatherd starts,

Roused from his sleep at midnight when he hears

The prowling wolf, and falters as he calls
On Saints to save. Here of the friends
I think

Who now, I ween, remember me, and fill

The glass of votive friendship. At the And where the mirror of the mind re-

Will not thy cheek, Beloved, change its hue.

And in those gentle eyes uncall'd-for

Tremble? I will not wish thee not to ween:

Such tears are free from bitterness, and

Who know not what it is sometimes to

And weep at midnight, are but instruments

Of Nature's common work. Yes, think of me.

My Edith, think that, travelling far awav.

Thus I beguile the solitary hours

With many a day-dream, picturing scenes as fair

Of peace, and comfort, and domestic bliss As ever to the youthful poet's eye Creative Fancy fashion'd. Think of me, Though absent, thine; and if a sigh will rise.

And tears, unbidden, at the thought steal down.

Sure hope will cheer thee, and the happy hour

Of meeting soon all sorrow overpay.

III

WRITTEN AFTER VISITING THE CONVENT OF ARRABIDA

NEAR SETUBAL

March 22, 1796

[Published in Letters from Spain and Portugal, 1797. The original version has been largely rewritten.]

HAPPY the dwellers in this holy house: For surely never worldly thoughts intrude

On this retreat, this sacred solitude,

Where Quiet with Religion makes her home.

And ye who tenant such a goodly scene, How should ye be but good, where all is fair.

flects

Serenest beauty? O'er these mountain wilds

The insatiate eye with ever new delight Roams raptured, marking now where to the wind

The tall tree bends its many-tinted boughs

With soft accordant sound: and now the sport

Of joyous sea-birds o'er the tranquil

And now the long-extending stream of

Where the broad orb of day refulgent sinks

Beneath old Ocean's line. To have no

That eat the heart, no wants that to the earth

Chain the reluctant spirit, to be freed From forced communion with the selfish

Who worship Mammon,—yea, emanci-

From this world's bondage, even while the soul

Inhabits still its corruptible clay, . . Almost, ye dwellers in this holy house, Almost I envy you. You never see Pale Misery's asking eye, nor roam about Those huge and hateful haunts of crowded men.

Where Wealth and Power have built their palaces,

Fraud spreads his snares secure, man prevs on man.

Iniquity abounds, and rampant Vice, With an infection worse than mortal, taints

The herd of humankind.

I too could love, Ye tenants of this sacred solitude.

Here to abide, and when the sun rides high

Seek some sequester'd dingle's coolest shade:

And at the breezy hour, along the beach Stray with slow step, and gaze upon the

And while the breath of evening fann'd my brow.

And the wild waves with their continuous sound Soothed my accustom'd ear, think thankfully That I had from the crowd withdrawn in time. And found an harbour. . . Yet may yonder deen Suggest a less unprofitable thought, Monastic brethren. Would the mariner, Though storms may sometimes swell the mighty waves. And o'er the reeling bark with thundering crash Impel the mountainous surge, quit vonder deep. And rather float upon some tranquil sea, Whose moveless waters never feel the [soul! In safe stagnation? Rouse thyself my No season this for self-deluding dreams; It is thy spring-time; sow, if thou would'st reap; Then, after honest labour, welcome rest, In full contentment not to be enjoy'd Unless when duly earn'd. O happy then To know that we have walked among mankind More sinn'd against than sinning! Happy then To muse on many a sorrow overpast, And think the business of the day is And as the evening of our lives shall The peaceful evening, with a Christian's

IV

Expect the dawn of everlasting day.

Lisbon, 1796.

ON MY OWN MINIATURE PICTURE
TAKEN AT TWO YEARS OF AGE

[Published in Poems, 1797.]

And I was once like this! that glowing cheek

Was mine, those pleasure-sparkling eyes; that brow

Smooth as the level lake, when not a breeze

Dies o'er the sleeping surface!.. Twenty

Have wrought strange alteration! Of the friends

Who once so dearly prized this miniature, And loved it for its likeness, some are

To their last home; and some, estranged in heart,

Beholding me, with quick-averted glance [hues

Pass on the other side. But still these Remain unalter'd, and these features wear

The look of Infancy and Innocence.

I search myself in vain, and find no

trace
Of what I was: those lightly arching

lines
Dark and o'erhanging now; and that
sweet face

Settled in these strong lineaments!..

There were Who form'd high hopes and flattering ones of thee,

Young Robert! for thine eye was quick to speak

Each opening feeling: should they not have known,

If the rich rainbow on a morning cloud Reflects its radiant dyes, the husbandman 21

Beholds the ominous glory, and foresees Impending storms! . . They augured happily,

That thou didst love each wild and wondrous tale

Of facry fiction, and thine infant tongue Lisp'd with delight the godlike deeds of Greece

And rising Rome; therefore they deem'd, forsooth,

That thou shouldst tread Preferment's pleasant path.

Ill-judging ones! they let thy little feet

Stray in the pleasant paths of Poesy, 30 And when thou shouldst have prest amid the crowd.

There didst thou love to linger out the day.

Loitering beneath the laurel's barren shade. [wrong?

Spirit of Spenser! was the wanderer Bristol, 1796.

v

RECOLLECTIONS OF A DAY'S JOURNEY IN SPAIN

[Published in Letters from Spain and Portugal, 1797, under the title 'Retrospective Musings'. The original version has been practically rewritten.]

Not less delighted do I call to mind, Land of Romance, thy wild and lovely scenes.

Than I beheld them first. Pleased I retrace

With memory's eye the placid Minho's course,

And catch its winding waters gleaming bright

Amid the broken distance. I review Leon's wide wastes, and heights precipitous,

Seen with a pleasure not unmix'd with dread.

As the sagacious mules along the brink Wound patiently and slow their way secure:

And rude Galicia's hovels, and huge rocks

And mountains, where, when all beside was dim.

Dark and broad-headed the tall pines erect

Rose on the farthest eminence distinct, Cresting the evening sky.

Rain now falls thick, And damp and heavy is the unwholesome air;

I by this friendly hearth remember Spain, And tread in fancy once again the road, Where twelve months since I held my way, and thought

Of England, and of all my heart held

And wish'd this day were come.

The morning mist, Well I romember, hover'd o'er the heath, When with the earliest dawn of day wo left

The solitary Venta.¹ Soon the Sun Rose in his glory; scatter'd by the breeze

¹ Venta de Peralbanegas.

The thin fog roll'd away, and now emerged

We saw where Oropesa's castled hill Tower'd dark, and dimly seen; and now

we pass'd
'Torvalva's quiet huts, and on our way

Paused frequently, look'd back, and gazed around,

Then journey'd on, yet turn'd and gazed again,

So lovely was the scene. That ducal pile

Of the Toledos now with all its towers Shone in the sunlight. Half way up the hill,

Embower'd in olives, like the abode of Peace,

Lay Lagartina; and the cool fresh gale Bending the young corn on the gradual slope

Play'd ô'er its varying verdure. I beheld A convent near, and could almost have thought

The dwellers there must needs be holy men.

For as they look'd around them all they saw

Was good.

But when the purple eve came on, How did the lovely landscape fill my heart!

Trees scatter'd among peering rocks adorn'd

The near ascent; the vale was overspread

With ilex in its wintry foliage gay, Old cork trees through their soft and swelling bark

Bursting, and glaucous olives, underneath

Whose fertilizing influence the green herb Grows greener, and with heavier ears enrich'd 50

The healthful harvest bends. Pellucid streams

Through many a vocal channel from the hills

Wound through the valley their melodious way;

And o'er the intermediate woods descried,

Naval-Moral's church tower announced to us

Our resting-place that night,—a welcome mark;

Though willingly we loiter'd to behold In long expanse Plasencia's fertile plain, And the high mountain range which bounded it.

Now losing fast the roseate hue that eve Shed o'er its summit and its snowy breast.

For eve was closing now. Faint and

The murmurs of the goatherd's scatter'd flock

Were borne upon the air, and sailing slow

The broad-wing'd stork sought on the church tower top

His consecrated nest. O lovely scenes! I gazed upon you with intense delight, And yet with thoughts that weigh the spirit down.

I was a stranger in a foreign land,

And knowing that these eyes should never more 70 Behold that glorious prospect, Earth

Behold that glorious prospect, Earth

Appear'd the place of pilgrimage it is. Bristol, Jan. 15, 1797.

VI TO MARGARET HILL

WRITTEN FROM LONDON. 1798.

[Published in *Poems*, vol. ii, 1799, under the title, 'Metrical Letter, Written from London.']

MARGARET! my Cousin, . . nay, you must not smile,

I love the homely and familiar phrase: And I will call thee Cousin Margaret, However quaint amid the measured

The good old term appears. Oh! it looks ill

When delicate tongues disclaim old

terms of kin,
Sir-ing and Madam-ing as civilly
As if the road between the heart and lips
Were such a weary and Laplandish

Were such a weary and Laplandish way,

That the poor travellers came to the red gates

Half frozen. Trust me, Cousin Margaret,

For many a day my memory hath

The creditor with me on your account, And made me shame to think that I should owe

So long the debt of kindness. But in truth.

Like Christian on his pilgrimage, 1 bear So heavy a pack of business, that albeit

I toil on mainly, in our twelve hours' race

Time leaves me distanced. Loth indeed

That for a moment you should lay to me 20

Unkind neglect; mine, Margaret, is a heart

That smokes not, yet methinks there should be some

Who know its genuine warmth. I am not one

Who can play off my smiles and courtesies

To every Lady of her lap-dog tired

Who wants a play-thing; I am no sworn friend

Of half-an-hour, as apt to leave as love; Mine are no mushroom feelings, which spring up

At once without a seed and take no root,

Wiseliest distrusted. In a narrow sphere, 30

The little circle of domestic life, I would be known and loved: the world

beyond
Is not for me. But, Margaret, sure

That you should know me well, for you and I

Grew up together, and when we look back

Upon old times, our recollections paint The same familiar faces. Did I wield The wand of Merlin's magic, I would make

Brave witchcraft. We would have a faery ship,

Ay, a new Ark, as in that other flood 40 Which swept the sons of Anak from the earth;

The Sylphs should waft us to some goodly isle

Like that where whilom old Apollidon, Retiring wisely from the troublous world.

Built up his blameless spell; and I would bid

The Sea-Nymphs pile around their coral bowers,

That we might stand upon the beach, and mark

The far-off breakers shower their silver spray,

And hear the eternal roar, whose pleasant sound

Told us that never mariner should reach 50

Our quiet coast. In such a blessed isle

We might renew the days of infancy, And Life like a long childhood pass away.

Without one care. It may be, Margaret, That I shall yet be gather'd to my friends;

For I am not of those who live estranged Of choice, till at the last they join their race

In the family-vault. If so, if I should lose,

Like my old friend the Pilgrim, this huge pack 59

So heavy on my shoulders, I and mine Right pleasantly will end our pilgrimage. If not, if I should never get beyond

This Vanity-town, there is another world

Where friends will meet. And often, Margaret,

I gaze at night into the boundless sky, And think that I shall there be born again,

The exalted native of some better star; And, like the untaught American, I look To find in Heaven the things I loved on earth.

VII HISTORY

[First published in The Morning Post, January 16, 1799; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1800, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

Thou chronicle of crimes! I'll read no more:

For I am one who willingly would love His fellow-kind. O gentle Poesy, Receive me from the court's polluted

scenes,

From dungeon horrors, from the fields of war,

Receive me to your haunts, . . that I may

My nature's better feelings, for my soul Sickens at man's misdeeds!

I spake, when lo!
There stood before me, in her majesty,
Clio, the strong-eyed Muse. Upon her

Sate a calm anger. Go, young man, she cried.

Sigh among myrtle bowers, and let thy soul

Effuse itself in strains so sorrowful sweet, That love-sick Maids may weep upon thy page,

Soothed with delicious sorrow. Oh shame! shame!

Was it for this I waken'd thy young mind?

Was it for this I made thy swelling heart

Throb at the deeds of Greece, and thy boy's eye

So kindle when that glorious Spartan

died?
Boy! boy! deceive me not!.. What

if the tale 20
Of murder'd millions strike a chilling pang;

What if Tiberius in his island stews,

And Philip at his beads, alike inspire Strong anger and contempt; hast thou not risen

With nobler feelings, . . with a deeper

For freedom? Yes, if righteously thy soul

Loathes the black history of human crimes

And human misery, let that spirit fill Thy song, and it shall teach thee, boy! to raise

Strains such as Cato might have deign'd to hear,

As Sidney in his hall of bliss may love. Westbury, 1798.

VIII

WRITTEN IMMEDIATELY AFTER READING THE SPEECH OF ROBERT EMMET

ON HIS TRIAL AND CONVICTION FOR HIGH TREASON, SEPT., 1803

'LET no man write my epitaph; let my grave

Be uninscribed, and let my memory rest Till other times are come, and other men, Who then may do me justice.' 1

Emmet, no!

No withering curse hath dried my spirit up, That I should now be silent, . . that my

Should from the stirring inspiration

shrink,

Now when it shakes her, and withhold her voice.

Of that divinest impulse never more Worthy, if impious I withheld it now, 10 Hardening my heart. Here, here in this free Isle.

To which in thy young virtue's erring zeal

¹ These were the words in his speech: ' Let there be no inscription upon my tomb. Let no man write my epitaph. No man can write my epitaph. I am here ready to die. I am not allowed to vindicate my character; and when I am prevented from vindicating myself, let no man dare to calumniate me. Let my character and my motives repose in obscurity and peace, till other times and other men can do them justice. Then shall my character be vindicated; then may my epitaph be written. I HAVE DONE.'

Thou wert so perilous an enemy, Here in free England shall an English hand

Build thy imperishable monument;

O, . . to thine own misfortune and to

By thine own deadly error so beguiled. Here in free England shall an English

Raise up thy mourning-song. For thou hast paid

The bitter penalty of that misdeed; 20 Justice hath done her unrelenting part, If she in truth be Justice who drives on. Bloody and blind, the chariot wheels of death.

So young, so glowing for the general

Oh what a lovely manhood had been thine.

When all the violent workings of thy youth

Had pass'd away, hadst thou been wisely spared,

Left to the slow and certain influences Of silent feeling and maturing thought. How had that heart, . . that noble heart of thine,

Which even now had snapt one spell, which beat

With such brave indignation at the shame

And guilt of France, and of her miscreant Lord.

How had it clung to England! With what love.

What pure and perfect love, return'd to her. Now worthy of thy love, the champion

For freedom, . . yea, the only champion

And soon to be the Avenger. But the

Hath fallen, the indiscriminating blow, That for its portion to the Grave con-

sign'd Youth, Genius, generous Virtue. Oh. grief, grief!

Oh, sorrow and reproach! Have ye to learn.

Deaf to the past, and to the future blind,

Ye who thus irremissibly exact

The forfeit life, how lightly life is staked, When in distemper'd times the feverish mind

To strong delusion yields? Have ye to

With what a deep and spirit-stirring voice Pity doth call Revenge? Have ye no hearts

To feel and understand how Mercy tames 50

The rebel nature, madden'd by old wrongs,

And binds it in the gentle bands of love, When steel and adamant were weak to hold

That Samson-strength subdued!

Let no man write

Thy epitaph! Emmet, nay; thou shalt not go

Without thy funeral strain! O young and good

And wise, though erring here, thou shalt not go

Unhonour'd nor unsung. And better thus

Beneath that indiscriminating stroke, Better to fall, than to have lived to mourn. 60

As sure thou wouldst, in misery and remorse,

Thine own disastrous triumph; to have seen.

If the Almighty at that aweful hour Had turn'd away his face, wild Ignorance

Let loose, and frantic Vengeance, and dark Zeal,

And all bad passions tyrannous, and the fires

Of Persecution once again ablaze. How had it sunk into thy soul to see,

Last curse of all, the ruffian slaves of

In thy dear native country lording it! 70 How happier thus, in that heroic mood That takes away the sting of death, to

die, fgiven, By all the good and all the wise for-Yea, in all ages by the wise and good

fo be remember'd, mourn'd, and honour'd still.

Keswick.

IX

VERSES

SPOKEN IN THE THEATRE AT OXFORD, UPON THE INSTALLATION OF LORD GRENVILLE

GRENVILLE, few years have had their course, since last

Exulting Oxford view'd a spectacle

Like this day's pomp; and yet to those who throng'd

These walls, which echo'd then with Portland's praise.

What change hath intervened! The bloom of spring

Is fled from many a cheek, where roseate joy

And beauty bloom'd; the inexorable

Hath claimed its portion; and the band of youths,

Who then, collected here as in a port From whence to launch on life's adven-

turous sea,
Stood on the beach, ere this have found
their lots

Of good or evil. Thus the lapse of years, Evolving all things in its quiet course,

Hath wrought for them; and though those years have seen

Fearful vicissitudes, of wilder change Than history yet had learnt, or old romance

In wildest mood imagined, yet these too, Portentous as they seem, not less have risen

Each of its natural cause the sure effect, All righteously ordain'd. Lo! kingdoms wreck'd, 20

Thrones overturn'd, built up, then swept

Like fabrics in the summer clouds, dispersed

By the same breath that heap'd them; rightful kings,

Who, from a line of long-drawn ancestry Held the transmitted sceptre, to the axe Bowing the anointed head; or dragg'd away

To eat the bread of bondage; or escaped

shield.

There only safe. Such fate have vicious courts.

Statesmen corrupt, and fear-struck policy,

Upon themselves drawn down; till Europe, bound

In iron chains, lies bleeding in the dust, Beneath the feet of upstart tyranny: Only the heroic Spaniard, he alone

Yet unsubdued in these degenerate days, With desperate virtue, such as in old

Hallow'd Saguntum and Numantia's name.

Stands up against the oppressor undismay'd.

So may the Almighty bless the noble

And crown with happy end their holiest cause!

Deem not these dread events the monstrous birth

Of chance! And thou, O England, who dost ride

Serene amid the waters of the flood, Preserving, even like the Ark of old, Amid the general wreck, thy purer faith, Domestic loves, and ancient liberty,

Look to thyself, O England! for be sure, Even to the measure of thine own desert, The cup of retribution to thy lips

Shall soon or late be dealt ! . . a thought that well Might fill the stoutest heart of all thy

With aweful apprehension. Therefore,

they Who fear the Eternal's justice, bless thy name.

Grenville, because the wrongs of Africa Cry out no more to draw a curse from Heaven

On England!—for if still the trooping

Track by the scent of death the accursed

Freighted with human anguish, in her

Pursue the chace, crowd round her keel, Be it thy pride in life, thy thought in and dart

Beneath the shadow of Britannia's Toward the sound contending, when they hear

The frequent carcass from her guilty deck

Dash in the opening deep, no longer now The guilt shall rest on England; but if

There be among her children, hard of heart

And sear'd of conscience, men who set at nought

Her laws and God's own word, upon themselves

Their sin be visited!.. the red-cross

Redeem'd from stain so foul, no longer now

Covereth the abomination.

This thy praise, O Grenville, and while ages roll away 70 This shall be thy remembrance. Yea, when all

For which the tyrant of these abject times

Hath given his honourable name on earth.

His nights of innocent sleep, his hopes of heaven;

When all his triumphs and his deeds of blood.

The fretful changes of his feverish pride, His midnight murders and perfidious plots.

Are but a tale of years so long gone by, That they who read distrust the hideous truth.

Willing to let a charitable doubt Abate their horror; Grenville, even then Thy memory will be fresh among mankind:

Afric with all her tongues will speak of

With Wilberforce and Clarkson, he whom Heaven.

To be the apostle of this holy work,

Raised up and strengthen'd, and upheld through all

His arduous toil. To end the glorious

That blessed, that redeeming deed was thine:

death,

Thy praise beyond the tomb. The statesman's fame Will fade, the conqueror's laurel crown grow sere: Fame's loudest trump upon the ear of Leaves but a dying echo; they alone Are held in everlasting memory, Whose deeds partake of heaven. Long ages honce. Nations unborn, in cities that shall rise Along the palmy coast, will bless thy name; And Senegal and secret Niger's shore, And Calabar, no longer startled then With sounds of murder, will, like Isis now. Ring with the songs that tell of Grenville's praise. Keswick, 1810. X THANKSGIVING FOR VICTORY [Written for Music, and composed by Shield.1 GLORY to Thee in thine omnipotence, O Lord, who art our shield and our defence. And dost dispense, As seemeth best to thine unerring will (Which passeth mortal sense), The lot of Victory still; Edging sometimes with might the sword unjust: And bowing to the dust

The rightful cause, that so much

seeming ill

May thine appointed purposes fulfil;
Sometimes, as in this late auspicious

For which our hymns we raise.

Making the wicked feel thy present

power;

Glory to thee and praise,

Almighty God, by whom our strength

was given!

Glory to thee, O Lord of Earth and

Heaven!

ΧI

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN LADY LONSDALE'S ALBUM, AT LOWTHER CASTLE, OCTOBER 13, 1821

[First published in Joanna Baillie's A Collection of Poems, chiefty Manuscript, in 1823.]

]

SOMETIMES in youthful years,
When in some ancient ruin 1 have
stood,

Alone and musing, till with quiet tears
I felt my cheeks bedew'd,

A melancholy thought hath made me

For this our age, and humbled me in mind,

That it should pass away and leave No monuments behind.

9

Not for themselves alone
Our fathers lived; nor with a niggard
hand
Raised they the fabrics of enduring

stone,

Which yet adorn the land;

Their piles, memorials of the mighty dead,

Survive them still, majestic in decay; But ours are like ourselves, I said, The creatures of a day.

3

With other feelings now,
Lowther! have I beheld thy stately
walls,

Thy pinnacles, and broad embattled brow,

And hospitable halls. 20
The sun those wide-spread battlements shall crest,

And silent years unharming shall go by Till centuries in their course invest Thy towers with sanctity.

Keswick, 1815.

4

But thou the while shalt bear,
To after-times, an old and honour'd
name,

And to remote posterity declare
Thy Founder's virtuous fame.

Fair structure! worthy the triumphant age

Of glorious England's opulence and power, 30

Peace be thy lasting heritage, And happiness thy dower!

XII

STANZAS

ADDRESSED TO W. R. TURNER, ESQ., R.A.,
ON HIS VIEW OF THE LAGO MAGGIORE
FROM THE TOWN OF ARONA

[First published in The Keepsake, 1829.]

1

TURNER, thy pencil brings to mind a day

When from Laveno and the Beuscer hill

I over Lake Verbanus held my way In pleasant fellowship, with wind at will;

Smooth were the waters wide, the sky serene,

And our hearts gladden'd with the joyful scene;

2

Joyful, . . for all things minister'd delight, . .

The lake and land, the mountains and the vales;

The Alps their snowy summits rear'd in light,

Tempering with gelid breath the summer gales;

And verdant shores and woods refresh'd the eye

That else had ached beneath that brilliant sky.

3

To that elaborate island were we bound Of yore the scene of Borromean pride, . .

Folly's prodigious work; where all around,

Under its coronet and self-belied,

Look where you will, you cannot choose but see

The obtrusive motto's proud 'HU-

4

Far off the Borromean saint was seen, Distinct though distant, o'er his native town,

Where his Colossus with benignant mien

Looks from its station on Arona down: To it the inland sailor lifts his eyes, From the wide lake, when perilous

storms arise.

5

But no storm threaten'd on that summer-day;

The whole rich scene appear'd for joyance made;

With many a gliding bark the mere was gay,

The fields and groves in all their

wealth array'd;
could have thought the Sun beheld

I could have thought the Sun beheld with smiles

Those towns and palaces and populous isles. 30

6

From fair Arona, even on such a day, When gladness was descending like a shower,

Great painter, did thy gifted eye survey The splendid scene; and, conscious of its power,

Well hath thine hand inimitable given The glories of the lake, and land, and heaven.

Keswick, 1828.

IIIX

ON A PICTURE BY J. M. WRIGHT, ESQ.

[First published in The Keepsake for 1829, under the title of 'Lucy and her Bird'.]

1

THE sky-lark hath perceived his prison-

Unclosed; for liberty the captive tries:

Puss eagerly hath watched him from the floor,

And in her grasp he flutters, pants, and dies.

2

Lucy's own Puss, and Lucy's own dear Bird,

Her foster'd favourites both for many a day.

That which the tender-hearted girl preferr'd,

She in her fondness knew not sooth to say.

3

For if the sky-lark's pipe were shrill and strong,

And its rich tones the thrilling ear might please,

Yet Pussybel could breathe a fireside song

As winning, when she lay on Lucy's knees.

4

Both knew her voice, and each alike would seek

Her eye, her smile, her fondling touch to gain:

How faintly then may words her sorrow speak, [slain.

When by the one she sees the other

5

The flowers fall scatter'd from her lifted hands;

A cry of grief she utters in affright; And self-condemn'd for negligence she stands

Aghast and helpless at the cruel sight.

6

Come, Lucy, let me dry those tearful eyes;

Take thou, dear child, a lesson not unholy

From one whom nature taught to moralize

Both in his mirth and in his melancholy.

7

I will not warn thee not to set thy heart

Too fondly upon perishable things; In vain the earnest preacher spends his

In vain the earnest preacher spends his art

Upon that theme; in vain the poet sings.

8

It is our nature's strong necessity,

And this the soul's unerring instincts tell:

Therefore I say, let us love worthily, Dear child, and then we cannot love too well.

a

Better it is all losses to deplore,

Which dutiful affection can sustain, Than that the heart should, in its inmost

Harden without it, and have lived in vain.

10

This love which thou hast lavish'd, and the woe

Which makes thy lip now quiver with distress.

Are but a vent, an innocent overflow,
From the deep springs of female tenderness.

11

And something I would teach thee from the grief

That thus hath fill'd those gentle eyes with tears.

The which may be thy sober, sure relief

When sorrow visits thee in after years.

12

I ask not whither is the spirit flown
That lit the eye which there in death

is seal'd:

Our Father hath not made that mystery known;

Needless the knowledge, therefore not reveal'd.

13

But didst thou know in sure and sacred truth,

It had a place assign d in yonder skies, There through an endless life of joyous youth, 5r

To warble in the bowers of Paradise;

14

Lucy, if then the power to thee were given

In that cold form its life to re-engage, Wouldst thou call back the warbler from its Heaven,

To be again the tenant of a cage?

15

Only that thou might'st cherish it again, Wouldst thou the object of thy love recall

To mortal life, and chance, and change, and pain,

And death, which must be suffered once by all?

16

Oh, no, thou say'st: oh, surely not, not so!

I read the answer which those looks express:

For pure and true affection well I know Leaves in the heart no room for selfishness.

17

Such love of all our virtues is the gem;
We bring with us the immortal seed
at birth:

Of heaven it is, and heavenly; woe to

Who make it wholly earthly and of earth!

18

What we love perfectly, for its own sake We love and not our own, being ready thus

Whate'er self-sacrifice is ask'd, to make; That which is best for it, is best for us.

19

O Lucy! treasure up that pious thought!

It hath a balm for sorrow's deadliest darts:

And with true comfort thou wilt find it fraught,

If grief should reach thee in thy heart of hearts.

Buckland, 1828.

XIV

TO CHARLES LAMB

ON THE REVIEWAL OF HIS 'ALBUM VERSES' IN 'THE LITERARY GAZETTE'

[Published in The Times, August 6, 1830.]

CHARLES LAMB, to those who know thee justly dear

For rarest genius, and for sterling worth,

Unchanging friendship, warmth of heart sincere,

And wit that never gave an ill thought birth.

Nor ever in its sport infix'd a sting; To us, who have admired and loved thee

long,
It is a proud as well as pleasant thing

To hear thy good report, now borne along

Upon the honest breath of public praise: We know that with the elder sons of song,

In honouring whom thou hast delighted

Thy name shall keep its course to after days.

The empty pertness, and the vulgar wrong.

The flippant folly, the malicious will,

Which have assailed thee, now, or heretofore.

Find, soon or late, their proper meed of shame;

The more thy triumph, and our pride the more.

When witling critics to the world proclaim,

In lead, their own dolt incapacity.

Matter it is of mirthful memory

To think, when thou wert early in the field,

How doughtily small Jeffrey ran at thee A-tilt, and broke a bulrush on thy shield. And now, a veteran in the lists of fame, I ween, old Friend! thou art not worse bested

When with a maudlin eye and drunken aim [head.

20 Dulness hath thrown a jerdan at thy

THE RETROSPECT

[Published in *Poems by Robert Lovell and Robert Southey*, 1795. In its present form the poem has been completely rewritten.]

On as I journey through the vale of years.

By hopes enliven'd, or deprest by fears.

Allow me, Memory, in thy treasured store,

To view the days that will return no more.

And yes! before thine intellectual ray,

The clouds of mental darkness melt away!

As when, at earliest day's awakening dawn.

The hovering mists obscure the dewy lawn.

O'er all the landscape spread their influence chill,

Hang o'er the vale and wood, and hide the hill,

Anon, slow-rising, comes the orb of day,

Slow fade the shadowy mists and roll away,

The prospect opens on the traveller's sight,

And hills and vales and woods reflect the living light.

Othou, the mistress of my future days, Accept thy minstrel's retrospective lays; To whom the minstrel and the lyre belong,

Accept, my Edith, Memory's pensive song.

Of long-past days I sing, ere yet I knew Or thought and grief, or happiness and you;

Ere yet my infant heart had learnt to prove

The cares of life, the hopes and fears of love.

Corston, twelve years in various fortunes fled

Have pass'd with restless progress o'er my head.

Since in thy vale beneath the master's

I dwelt an inmate of the village school.

Yet still will Memory's busy eye retrace

Each little vestige of the well-known place;

Each wonted haunt and scene of youthful joy,

Where merriment has cheer'd the careless boy; 30

Well-pleased will fancy still the spot survey

Where once he triumph'd in the boyish play,

Without one care where every morn he rose,

Where every evening sunk to calm repose.

Large was the house, though fallen in course of fate

From its old grandeur and manorial state. [Squire

Lord of the manor, here the jovial Once called his tenants round the crackling fire;

Here while the glow of joy suffused his face.

He told his ancient exploits in the chase.

And, proud his rival sportsmen to surpass,

He lit again the pipe, and fill'd again the glass.

But now no more was heard at early morn [horn;

The echoing clangor of the huntsman's
No more the eager hounds with
deepening cry

Leapt round him as they knew their pastime nigh;

The Squire no more obey'd the morning call,

Nor favourite spaniels fill'd the sportsman's hall;

For he, the last descendant of his race. Slept with his fathers, and forgot the chase.

There now in petty empire o'er the school

The mighty master held despotic rule; Trembling in silence all his deeds we saw, [law;

His look a mandate, and his word a Severe his voice, severe and stern his mien.

And wondrous strict he was, and wondrous wise, I ween.

Even now through many a long long year I trace

The hour when first with awe I view'd his face:

Even now recall my entrance at the dome, . .

'Twas the first day I ever left my home! 60

Years intervening have not worn

The deep remembrance of that wretched day,

Nor taught me to forget my earliest fears. [tears:

A mother's fondness, and a mother's When close she prest me to her sorrowing heart.

As loth as even I myself to part;

And I, as I beheld her sorrows flow, With painful effort hid my inward woe.

But time to youthful troubles brings relief.

And each new object weans the child from grief.

Like April showers the tears of youth descend, [end,

Suddenly they fall, and suddenly they And fresher pleasure cheers the following hour,

As brighter shines the sun after the April shower.

Methinks even now the interview I see.

The Mistress's glad smile, the Master's glee;

Much of my future happiness they said.

Much of the easy life the scholars led, Of spacious play-ground and of wholesome air,

The best instruction and the tenderest care; 80

And when I followed to the gardendoor

My father, till through tears I saw no more, . .

How civilly they sooth'd my parting pain,

And never did they speak so civilly again.

Why loves the soul on earlier years to dwell,

When Memory spreads around her saddening spell,

When discontent, with sullen gloom o'ercast,

Turns from the present and prefers the past?

Why calls reflection to my pensive view

Each trifling act of infancy anew, 90

Each trifling act with pleasure pondering o'er,

Even at the time when trifles please no more?

Yet is remembrance sweet, though well I know [woe;

The days of childhood are but days of Some rude restraint, some petty tyrant sours

What else should be our sweetest blithest hours:

Yet is it sweet to call those hours to mind...

Those easy hours for ever left behind; Ere care began the spirit to oppress, When ignorance itself was happiness.

Such was my state in those remember'd years

When two small acres bounded all my fears; [call

And therefore still with pleasure I re-The tapestried school, the bright brown-boarded hall,

The murmuring brook, that every morning saw

The due observance of the cleanly law:

The walnuts, where, when favour would allow.

Full oft I went to search each wellstript bough:

stript bough; The crab-tree, which supplied a secret

With roasted crabs to deck the wintry

These trifling objects then my heart possest,

These trifling objects still remain imprest; [hind So when with unskill'd hand some idle

So when with unskill'd hand some idle Carves his rude name within a sapling's rind,

In after years the peasant lives to see The expanding letters grow as grows the tree;

Though every winter's desolating sway

Shake the hoarse grove and sweep the leaves away, [last,

That rude inscription uneffaced will Unalter'd by the storm or wintry blast.

Oh while well pleased the letter'd traveller roams

Among old temples, palaces, and domes, .

Strays with the Arab o'er the wreck of time

Where erst Palmyra's towers arose sublime, [pride,

Or marks the lazy Turk's lethargic And Grecian slavery on Ilyssus' side, Oh be it mine, aloof from public strife.

To mark the changes of domestic life, The alter'd scenes where once I bore

a part, Where every change of fortune strikes

the heart;
As when the merry bells with echoing sound

Proclaim the news of victory around, Rejoicing patriots run the news to spread

Of glorious conquest and of thousands

All join the loud huzzah with eager breath.

And triumph in the tale of blood and death:

But if extended on the battle-plain, Cut off in conquest some dear friend be slain. [eve.

Affection then will fill the sorrowing And suffering Nature grieve that one should die.

Cold was the morn, and bleak the wintry blast

Blew o'er the meadow, when I saw thee last.

My bosom bounded as I wander'd round

With silent step the long-remember'd ground, [hour,

Where I had loiter'd out so many an Chased the gay butterfly, and cull'd the flower,

Sought the swift arrow's erring course to trace.

Or with mine equals vied amid the chase. [away

I saw the church where I had slept The tedious service of the summer day; Or, hearing sadly all the preacher told, In winter waked and shiver'd with the cold.

Oft have my footsteps roam'd the sacred ground

Where heroes, kings, and poets sleep around;

Oft traced the mouldering castle's ivied wall.

Or aged convent tottering to its fall; Yet never had my bosom felt such pain, [again;

As, Corston, when I saw thy scenes For many a long-lost pleasure came to view,

For many a long-past sorrow rose anew;

Where whilom all were friends I stood alone, [known. Unknowing all I saw, of all I saw un-

There, where my little hands were wont to rear

With pride the earliest salad of the year:

Where never idle weed to spring was

Rank thorns and nettles rear'd their heads obscene.

Still all around and sad, I saw no more The playful group, nor heard the playful roar;

There echoed round no shout of mirth and glee,

It seem'd as though the world were changed like me! 170

Enough! it boots not on the past to dwell, . . [well! Fair scene of other years, a long fare-Rouse up, my soul! it boots not to repine.

Rouse up! for worthier feelings should be thine;

Thy path is plain and straight, . . that light is given, . .

Onward in faith, . . and leave the rest to Heaven.

Oxford, 1794.

HYMN TO THE PENATES

'Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me.'—The words of Agur.

ΟΙΚΟΙ βέλτερον είναι, έπει βλαβερον το θύρηφι.-- ΗΕSIOD.

[Published in Poems, 1797.]

YET one Song more! one high and solemn strain

Ere, Phoebus! on thy temple's ruin'd wall

I hang the silent harp: there may its strings,

When the rude tempest shakes the aged pile,

Make melancholy music. One song more!

PENATES, hear me! for to you I hymn The votive lay; whether, as sages deem, Ye dwell in inmost Heaven, the Counsellors

Of Jove; or if, Supreme of Deities, All things are yours, and in your holy train Jove proudly ranks, and Juno, whitearm'd Queen,

And wisest of Immortals, the dread Maid Athenian Pallas. Venerable Powers,

Hearken your hymn of praise! Though from your rites

Estranged, and exiled from your altars long,

I have not ceased to love you, Household Gods!

In many a long and melancholy hour Of solitude and sorrow, hath my heart With earnest longings pray'd to rest at

Beside your hallow'd hearth, . . for Peace is there! 20

Yes, I have loved you long! I call on ye Yourselves to witness with what holy joy, Shunning the common herd of humankind,

I have retired to watch your lonely fires And commune with myself:.. delightful hours,

That gave mysterious pleasure, made me know

Mine inmost heart, its weakness and its strength,

Taught me to cherish with devoutest care
Its deep unworldly feelings, taught me
too

The best of lessons-to respect myself. 30

Nor have I ever ceased to reverence you,

Domestic Deities! from the first dawn Of reason, through the adventurous paths of youth

Even to this better day, when on mine

The uproar of contending nations sounds But like the passing wind, and wakes no pulse

To tumult. When a child . . (for still I love

To dwell with fondness on my childish vears,)

When first, a little one, I left my home, I can remember the first grief I felt, 40 And the first painful smile that clothed my front

With feelings not its own: sadly at

I sat me down beside a stranger's hearth; And when the lingering hour of rest was come,

First wet with tears my pillow. As I grow

In years and knowledge, and the course of time

Developed the young feelings of my heart,

When most I loved in solitude to rove Amid the woodland gloom; or where the rocks

Darken'd old Avon's stream, in the ivied cave

Recluse to sit and brood the future song, . .

Yet not the less, Penates, loved I then Your altars; not the less at evening hour

Loved I beside the well-trimm'd fire to sit,

Absorb'd in many a dear deceitful dream Of visionary joys, . . deceitful dreams, . . And yet not vain; for painting purest bliss.

They form'd to Fancy's mould her votary's heart.

By Cherwell's sedgey side, and in the meads

Where Isis in her calm clear stream reflects 60

The willow's bending boughs, at early dawn,

In the noon-tide hour, and when the night-mist rose,

I have remember'd you; and when the noise

Of lewd Intemperance on my lonely ear Burst with loud tumult, as recluse I sate, Musing on days when man should be redeem'd

From servitude, and vice, and wretchedness.

I bless'd you, Household Gods! because I loved

Your peaceful altars and serener rites.

Nor did I cease to reverence you, when
driven
70

Amid the jarring crowd, an unfit man To mingle with the world; still, still my heart

Sigh'd for your sanctuary, and inly pined;

And loathing human converse, I have stray'd

Where o'er the sea-beach chilly howl'd the blast,

And gazed upon the world of waves, and wish'd

That I were far beyond the Atlantic deep,

In woodland haunts, a sojourner with Peace.

Not idly did the ancient poets dream, Who peopled earth with Deities. They trod 80

The wood with reverence where the Dryads dwelt:

At day's dim dawn or evening's misty hour

They saw the Oreads on their mountain haunts.

And felt their holy influence; nor impure

Of thought, nor ever with polluted hands.

Touch'd they without a prayer the Naiad's spring:

Nor without reverence to the River God Cross'd in unhappy hour his limpid stream.

Yet was this influence transient; such brief awe

Inspiring as the thunder's long loud

Strikes to the feeble spirit. Household Gods.

Not such your empire! in your votaries' breasts

No momentary impulse ye awake;

Nor fleeting, like their local energies, The deep devotion that your fanes impart.

O ye whom Youth has wilder'd on your

Or Pleasure with her syren song hath

Or Fame with spirit-stirring trump hath call'd

To climb her summits, . . to your Household Gods

Return; for not in Pleasure's gay abodes.

Nor in the unquiet unsafe halls of Fame Doth Happiness abide. O ye who grieve

Much for the miseries of your fellow-

More for their vices; ye whose honest

Scowl on Oppression,—ye whose honest hearts

Beat high when Freedom sounds her dread alarm;

O ye who quit the path of peaceful life Crusading for mankind . . a spaniel race That lick the hand that beats them, or tear all

Alike in frenzy; to your Household

Return! for by their altars Virtue dwells, ffires And Happiness with her; for by their He mingled, by himself he judged of

Tranquillity, in no unsocial mood,

Sits silent, listening to the pattering shower:

For, so Suspicion sleep not at the gate Of Wisdom, Falsehood shall not enter there.

As on the height of some huge eminence.

Reach'd with long labour, the wayfaring man

Pauses awhile, and gazing o'er the plain With many a sore step travell'd, turns him then

Serious to contemplate the onward road, And calls to mind the comforts of his

And sighs that he has left them, and

To stray no more: I on my way of life Muse thus, Penates, and with firmest faith

Devote myself to you. I will not quit, To mingle with the crowd, your calm abodes.

Where by the evening hearth Contentment sits

And hears the cricket chirp; where Love delights

To dwell, and on your altars lays his

That burns with no extinguishable flame.

Hear me, ye Powers benignant! there is one

Must be mine inmate, . . for I may not

But love him. He is one whom many wrongs

Have sicken'd of the world. There was a time

When he would weep to hear of wicked-

And wonder at the tale; when for the opprest

He felt a brother's pity, to the oppressor A good man's honest anger. His quick

Betray'd each rising feeling; thought

Leapt to his tongue. When first among mankind them,

And loved and trusted them, to Wisdom deaf,

And took them to his bosom. Falsehood met

Her unsuspecting victim, fair of front, And lovely as Apega's sculptured form, Like that false image caught his warm embrace.

And pierced his open breast. The reptile race

Clung round his bosom, and with viper folds

Encircling, stung the fool who foster'd them.

His mother was Simplicity, his sire Benevolence; in earlier days he bore His father's name; the world who in-

jured him

Call him Misanthropy. I may not choose But love him, Household Gods! for we grew up [bred,

Together, and in the same school were And our poor fortunes the same course have held,

Up to this hour.

Penates! some there are Who say, that not in the inmost heaven ye dwell,

Gazing with eyo remote on all the ways
Of man, his Guardian Gods; wiselier
they deem 161

A dearer interest to the human race Links you, yourselves the Spirits of the

No mortal eye may pierce the invisible world,

No light of human reason penetrate The depth where Truth lies hid. Yet to

The depth where Truth lies hid. Yet to this faith

My heart with instant sympathy assents; And I would judge all systems and all faiths

By that best touchstone, from whose test Deceit

Shrinks like the Arch-Fiend at Ithuriel's spear; 170

And Sophistry's gay glittering bubble bursts,

As at the spousals of the Nereid's son, When that false Florimel, with her prototype

Set side by side, in her unreal charms, Dissolved away. Nor can the halls of Heaven Give to the human soul such kindred joy,

As hovering o'er its earthly haunts it feels.

When with the breeze it dwells around the brow

Of one beloved on earth; or when at night

In dreams it comes, and brings with it the Days 180

And Joys that are no more. Or when, perchance

With power permitted to alleviate ill
And fit the sufferer for the coming woe,
Somestrange presage the Spirit breathes,
and fills

The breast with ominous fear, preparing For sorrow, pours into the afflicted heart The balm of resignation, and inspires With heavenly hope. Even as a child

delights

To visit day by day the favourite plant His hand has sown, to mark its gradual growth,

And watch all-anxious for the promised flower:

Thus to the blest spirit in innocence And pure affections like a little child, Sweet will it be to hover o'er the friends Beloved; then sweetest, if, as duty

prompts, With earthly care we in their breasts

have sown
The seeds of Truth and Virtue, holy
flowers

Whose odour reacheth Heaven.

When my sick Heart (Sick with hope long delay'd, than which no care

Weighs on the spirit heavier,) from itself Seeks the best comfort, often have I deem'd

That thou didst witness every inmost thought,

SEWARD! my dear! dear friend! For not in vain,

O early summon'd on thy heavenly course.

Was thy brief sojourn here; me didst thou leave

With strengthen'd step to follow the right path,

Till we shall meet again. Meantime I soothe

The deep regret of nature, with belief. O EDMUND! that thine eye's celestial To you the fragrant censer smoked, to

Pervades me now, marking with no mean joy

The movements of the heart that loved thee well!

Such feelings Nature prompts, and hence your rites.

Domestic Gods! arose. When for his

With ceaseless grief Syrophanes bewail'd, Mourning his age left childless, and his wealth

Heapt for an alien, he with obstinate eye Still on the imaged marble of the dead Dwelt, pampering sorrow. Thither from his wrath,

A safe asylum, fled the offending slave, And garlanded the statue, and implored His young lost lord to save. Remembrance then

Soften'd the father, and he loved to see The votive wreath renew'd, and the rich smoke

Curl from the costly censer slow and

From Egypt soon the sorrow-soothing

Divulging spread; before your idol

forms By every hearth the blinded Pagan knelt.

Pouring his prayers to these, and offering there

Vain sacrifice or impious, and sometimes With human blood your sanctuary defiled:

Till the first Brutus, tyrant-conquering chief.

Arose; he first the impious rites put Idied. down,

He fitliest, who for Freedom lived and The friend of humankind. Then did your feasts

Frequent recur and blameless; and when came

The solemn festival, whose happiest rites

Emblem'd Equality, the holiest truth. Crown'd with gay garlands were your statues seen,

The rich libation flowed: vain sacrifice! For not the poppy wreath nor fruits nor

Ye ask, Penates! nor the altar cleansed With many a mystic form; ye ask the

Made pure, and by domestic Peace and Love

Hallow'd to vou.

Hearken your hymn of praise, Penates! to your shrines I come for rest, There only to be found. Often at eve, As in my wanderings I have seen far off Some lonely light that spake of comfort there,

It told my heart of many a joy of home, When I was homeless. Often as I gazed From some high eminence on goodly

vales And cots and villages embower'd below, The thought would rise that all to me

was strange Amid the scene so fair, nor one small

Where my tired mind might rest, and call it Home.

There is a magic in that little word: It is a mystic circle that surrounds

Comforts and virtues never known beyond

The hallowed limit. Often has my 260

Ached for that quiet haven! Haven'd I think of those in this world's wilder-

Who wander on and find no home of

Till to the grave they go: them Poverty, Hollow-eyed fiend, the child of Wealth and Power,

Bad offspring of worst parents, aye afflicts,

Cankering with her foul mildews the chill'd heart;...

Them Want with scorpion scourge drives to the den

Of Guilt: . . them Slaughter for the price of death

¹ The Saturnalia.

Throws to her raven brood. Oh, not on them, 270

God of eternal Justice! not on them Let fall thy thunder!

Household Deities!
Then only shall be Happiness on earth
When man shall feel your sacred power,
and love

Your tranquil joys; then shall the city stand

A huge void sepulchre, and on the site Wherefortresses and palaces have stood, The clive grow, there shall the Tree of Peace

Strike its roots deep and flourish. This the state

Shall bless the race redeem'd of Man, when Wealth 280

And Power and all their hideous progeny Shall sink annihilate, and all mankind Live in the equal brotherhood of love. Heart-calming hope, and sure! for hitherward

Tend all the tumults of the troubled world,

Its woes, its wisdom, and its wickedness Alike; . . so He hath will'd, whose will is just.

Meantime, all hoping and expecting all

In patient faith, to you, Domestic Gods! Studious of other lore than song, 1 come.

Yet shall my Heart remember the past years

With honest pride, trusting that not in

Lives the pure song of Liberty and Truth.

Bristol, 1796.

ENGLISH ECLOGUES

[The first three of the following Eclogues were published in *Poems*, vol. ii, 1799, Eclogue II under the title of 'The Funeral'. Eclogue IV was published in *The Edinburgh Annual Register*, 1808.]

THE following Eclogues, I believe, bear no resemblance to any poems in our language. This species of composition has become popular in Germany, and I was induced to attempt it by what was told me of the German Idylls by my friend Mr. William Taylor of Norwich. So far, therefore, these pieces may be deemed imitations, though I am not acquainted with the German language at present, and have never seen any translations or specimens in this kind.

With bad Eclogues I am sufficiently acquainted, from Tityrus and Corydon down to our English Strephons and Thirsisses. No kind of poetry can boast of more illustrious names, or is more distinguished by the servile dulness of imitated nonsense. Pastoral writers, 'more silly than their sheep,' have, like their sheep, gone on in the same track one after another. Gay struck into a new path. His eclogues were the only ones which interested me when

I was a boy, and did not know they were burlesque. The subject would furnish matter for an essay, but this is not the place for it.

1799.

I THE OLD MANSION-HOUSE

STRANGER

OLD friend! why you seem bent on parish duty.

Breaking the highway stones, . . and 'tis a task

Somewhat too hard methinks for age like yours!

OLD MAN

Why yes! for one with such a weight of years

Upon his back!.. I've lived here, man and boy.

In this same parish, well nigh the full

Of man, being hard upon threescore and ten.

I can remember sixty years ago
The beautifying of this mansion here,
When my late Lady's father, the old
Squire,
10

Came to the estate.

STRANGER

Why then you have outlasted All his improvements, for you see they're making

Great alterations here.

OLD MAN

And if my poor old Lady could rise up...
God rest her soul! 'twould grieve her to behold

What wicked work is here.

STRANGER

They've set about it In right good earnest. All the front is gone; Here's to be turf, they tell me, and a

road

Round to the door. There were some yew trees too

Stood in the court. . .

OLD MAN

Ay, Master! fine old trees! Lord bless us! I have heard my father say 21

His grandfather could just remember back

When they were planted there. It was my task

To keep them trimm'd, and 'twas a pleasure to me;

All straight and smooth, and like a great green wall!

My poor old lady many a time would come

And tell me where to clip, for she had play'd

In childhood under them, and 'twas her

To keep them in their beauty. Plague, I say,

On their new-fangled whimsies! we shall have

A modern shrubbery here stuck full of firs And your pert poplar trees; . . I could as soon

Have plough'd my father's grave as cut them down!

STRANGER

But 'twill be lighter and more cheerful now:

A fine smooth turf, and with a carriage road

That sweeps conveniently from gate to gate.

I like a shrubbery too, for it looks fresh; And then there's some variety about it. In spring the lilac and the snow-ball flower,

And the laburnum with its golden strings 40

Waving in the wind: And when the autumn comes [ash, The bright red barries of the mountains

The bright red berries of the mountain-With pines enough in winter to look green,

And show that something lives. Sure this is better

Than a great hedge of yew, making it look [ever All the year round like winter, and for Dropping its poisonous leaves from the

under boughs Wither'd and bare.

OLD MAN

Ay! so the new Squire thinks; And pretty work he makes of it! What 'tis 49

To have a stranger come to an old house!

STRANGER

It seems you know him not?

OLD MAN

No, Sir, not I.
They tell me he's expected daily now;
But in my Lady's time he never came
But once, for they were very distant kin.
If he had play'd about here when a child
In that fore court, and eat the yewberries.

And sate in the porch, threading the jessamine flowers

Which fell so thick, he had not had the heart

To mar all thus!

STRANGER

Come! come! all is not wrong; Those old dark windows...

OLD MAN

They're demolish'd too, . . 60 As if he could not see through casement glass!

The very red-breasts, that so regular Came to my Lady for her morning crumbs.

Won't know the windows now!

STRANGER

Nay they were small, And then so darken'd round with jessamine.

Harbouring the vermin; .. yet I could have wish'd

That jessamine had been saved, which canopied

And bower'd and lined the porch.

OLD MAN

It did one good To pass within ten yards when 'twas in blossom.

There was a sweet-briar too that grew beside; 70

My Lady loved at evening to sit there
And knit; and her old dog lay at her
feet

And slept in the sun; 'twas an old favourite dog, . .

She did not love him less that he was old And feeble, and he always had a place By the fire-side: and when he died at last

She made me dig a grave in the garden for him.

For she was good to all! a woeful day 'Twas for the poor when to her grave she went!

STRANGER

They lost a friend then?

OLD MAN

You're a stranger here, 80 Or you wouldn't ask that question. Were they sick?

She had rare cordial waters, and for herbs She could have taught the Doctors. Then at winter, When weekly she distributed the bread In the poor old porch, to see her and to hear

The blessings on her! and I warrant them

They were a blessing to her when her wealth

Had been no comfort else. At Christmas, Sir!

It would have warm'd your heart if you had seen

Her Christmas kitchen, . . how the blazing fire 90 Made her fine pewter shine, and holly

boughs
So cheerful red, . . and as for misseltoe, . .

The finest bush that grew in the country round

Was mark'd for Madam. Then her old ale went

So bountiful about! a Christmas cask, And'twas a noble one!.. God help me, Sir!

But I shall never see such days again.

STRANGER

Things may be better yet than you suppose,

And you should hope the best.

OLD MAN

It don't look well, . . These alterations, Sir! I'm an old

man, 100
And love the good old fashions; we don't find

Old bounty in new houses. They've

destroy'd
All that my Lady loved; her favourite

Grubb'd up, . . and they do say that the great row

Of elms behind the house, which meet a-top.

They must fall too. Well! well! I did not think

To live to see all this, and 'tis perhaps A comfort I shan't live to see it long.

STRANGER

But sure all changes are not needs for the worse, My friend?

OLD MAN

May-hap they mayn't, Sir;...
for all that 110
I like what I've been used to. I remember

All this from a child up, and now to

lose it,
'Tis losing an old friend. There's
nothing left

As 'twas; . . I go abroad and only meet

With men whose fathers I remember boys;

The brook that used to run before my door,

That's gone to the great pond; the trees I learnt

To climb are down; and I see nothing now

That tells me of old times, . . except the stones

In the churchyard. You are young,
Sir, and I hope 120
Have many years in store but pray

Have many years in store, . . but pray to God

You mayn't be left the last of all your friends.

STRANGER

Well! well! you've one friend more than you're aware of.

If the Squire's taste don't suit with yours, I warrant

That's all you'll quarrel with: walk in and taste

His beer, old friend! and see if your old Lady E'er broach'd a better cask. You did

not know me,

But we're acquainted now. 'Twould not be easy

To make you like the outside; but within,

That is not changed, my friend! you'll always find

The same old bounty and old welcome there.

Westbury, 1798.

II HANNAH

Passing across a green and lonely lane A funeral met our view. It was not here A sight of every day, as in the streets Of some great city, and we stopt and

Whom they were bearing to the grave.

A girl,

They answer'd, of the village, who had pined

Through the long course of eighteen

Through the long course of eighteen painful months

With such slow wasting, that the hour of death

Came welcome to her. We pursued our way

To the house of mirth, and with that idle talk 10

Which passes o'erthemind and is forgot, We wore away the time. But it was eve

When homewardly I went, and in the air Was that cool freshness, that discolouring shade

Which makes the eye turn inward: hearing then

Over the vale the heavy toll of death Sound slow, it made me think upon the dead;

I question'd more, and learnt her mournful tale.

She bore unhusbanded a mother's pains,

And he who should have cherish'd her, far off 20

Sail'd on the seas. Left thus, a wretched

Scorn made a mock of her, and evil tongues

Were busy with her name. She had to bear

The sharper sorrow of neglect from him Whom she had loved too dearly. Once he wrote,

But only once that drop of comfort

To mingle with her cup of wretchedness; And when his parents had some tidings from him, There was no mention of poor Hannah there,

Or 'twas the cold inquiry, more unkind Than silence. So she pined and pined away.

And for herself and baby toil'd and toil'd:

Nor did she, even on her death-bed, rest From labour, knitting there with lifted arms.

Till she sunk with very weakness. Her old mother

Omitted no kind office, working for her, Albeit her hardest labour barely earn'd Enough to keep life struggling, and prolong

The pains of grief and sickness. Thus she lay

On the sick bed of poverty, worn out With her long suffering and those painful thoughts 41

Which at her heart were rankling, and so weak.

That she could make no effort to express Affection for her infant; and the child, Whose lisping love perhaps had solaced

Shunn'd her as one indifferent. But she too

Had grown indifferent to all things of earth.

Finding her only comfort in the thought Of that cold bed wherein the wretched

There had she now, in that last home, been laid,

And all was over now, . . sickness and grief,

Her shame, her suffering, and her penitence, . .

Their work was done. The school-boys as they sport

In the churchyard, for awhile might turn away

From the fresh grave till grass should cover it;

Nature would do that office soon; and none

Who trod upon the senseless turf would think

Of what a world of woes lay buried there!

Burton, near Christ Church, 1797.

III

THE RUINED COTTAGE

Ay, Charles! I knew that this would fix thine eye;..

This woodbine wreathing round the broken porch,

Its leaves just withering, yet one autumn flower

Still fresh and fragrant; and you hollyhock

That through the creeping weeds and nettles tall

Peers taller, lifting, column-like, a stem Bright with its roseate blossoms. I have

Many an old convent reverend in decay, And many a time have trod the castle courts

courts
And grass-green halls, yet never did

they strike

Home to the heart such melancholy
thoughts

As this poor cottage. Look! its little hatch

Fleeced with that grey and wintry moss; the roof

Part moulder'd in, the rest o'ergrown with weeds.

House-leek, and long thin grass, and greener moss:

So Nature steals on all the works of man, Sure conqueror she, reclaiming to herself

His perishable piles.

I led thee here, Charles, not without design; for this hath been

My favourite walk even since I was a boy; 20

And I remember, Charles, this ruin here, The neatest comfortable dwelling-place! That when I read in those dear books which first

Woke in my heart the love of poesy, How with the villagers Erminia dwelt, And Calidore for a fair shepherdess

Forsook his quest to learn the shepherd's lore.

My fancy drew from this the little hut Where that poor princess wept her hopeless love. Or where the gentle Calidore at eve 30 Led Pastorella home. There was not then

A weed where all these nettles overtop The garden-wall; but sweet-briar, scenting sweet

The morning air; rosemary and marioram.

All wholesome herbs; and then, that woodbine wreathed

So lavishly around the pillar'd porch Its fragrant flowers, that when I pass'd this way.

After a truant absence hastening home, I could not chuse but pass with slacken'd speed

By that delightful fragrance. Sadly changed 40

Is this poor cottage! and its dwellers, Charles!..

Theirs is a simple melancholy tale, . . There's scarce a village but can follow:

There's scarce a village but can fellowit: And yet, methinks, it will not weary thee,

And should not be untold.

A widow here

Dwelt with an orphan grandchild: just
removed

Above the reach of pinching poverty, She lived on some small pittance which sufficed.

In better times, the needful calls of life, Not without comfort. I remember her Sitting at even in that open doorway, 51 And spinning in the sun. Methinks I see her

Raising her eyes and dark-rimm'd spectacles

To see the passer-by, yet ceasing not To twirl her lengthening thread; or in the garden,

On some dry summer evening, walking round

To view her flowers, and pointing as she

Upon the ivory handle of her stick,

To some carnation whose o'erheavy head

Needed support; while with the watering-pot 60

Joanna follow'd, and refresh'd and trimm'd [child, The drooping plant; Joanna, her dear As lovely and as happy then as youth And innocence could make her.

Charles, it seems

As though I were a boy again, and all The mediate years with their vicissitudes A half-forgotten dream. I see the Maid So comely in her Sunday dress! her hair, Her bright brown hair, wreathed in contracting ourls:

And then her cheek! it was a red and

That made the delicate hues of art look loathsome.

The countrymen who on their way to church

Were leaning o'er the bridge, loitering

The bell's last summons, and in idleness Watching the stream below, would all look up

When she pass'd by. And her old Grandam, Charles, . .

When I have heard some erring infidel Speak of our faith as of a gloomy creed, Inspiring superstitious wretchedness,

Her figure has recurr'd; for she did love The Sabbath day; and many a time hath cross'd 81

These fields in rain and through the winter snows,

When I, a graceless boy, and cold of foot, Wishing the weary service at its end,

Have wonder'd wherefore that good dame came there,

Who, if it pleased her, might have staid beside

A comfortable fire.

One only care
Hung on her aged spirit. For herself,
Her path was plain before her, and the
close

Of her long journey near. But then her child 90

Soon to be left alone in this bad world, . . That was a thought which many a winter night

Had kept her sleepless: and when prudent love

In something better than a servant's

Had placed her well at last, it was a pang Like parting life to part with her dear oirl. One summer, Charles, when at the holidays

Return'd from school, I visited again My old accustom'd walks, and found in them

A joy almost like meeting an old friend, I saw the cottage empty, and the weeds Already crowding the neglected flowers. Joanna, by a villain's wiles seduced,

Had play'd the wanton, and that blow had reach'd

Her grandam's heart. She did not suffer long:

Her age was feeble, and this mortal grief Brought her grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.

I pass this ruin'd dwelling oftentimes, And think of other days. It wakes in

A transient sadness; but the feelings, Charles. 110

Which ever with these recollections rise, I trust in God they will not pass away. Westbury, 1799.

IV

THE ALDERMAN'S FUNERAL

STRANGER

Whom are they ushering from the world, with all

This pageantry and long parade of death?

TOWNSMAN

A long parade, indeed, Sir, and yet here You see but half; round yonder bend it reaches

A furlong further, carriage behind carriage.

STRANGER

'Tis but a mournful sight, and yet the pomp

Tempts me to stand a gazer.

TOWNSMAN

Yonder schoolboy Who plays the truant, says the proclamation

Of peace was nothing to the show; and But sure this lack of Christian charity even

The chairing of the members at election Would not have been a finer sight than this:

Only that red and green are prettier colours

Than all this mourning. There, Sir, vou behold

One of the red-gown'd worthies of the

The envy and the boast of our exchange: . .

Ay, what was worth, last week, a good half-million,

Screw'd down in yonder hearse!

STRANGER

Then he was born Under a lucky planet, who to-day Puts mourning on for his inheritance.

TOWNSMAN

When first I heard his death, that very

Leapt to my lips; but now the closing scene

Of the comedy hath waken'd wiser thoughts;

And I bless God, that, when I go to the grave,

There will not be the weight of wealth like his

To sink me down.

STRANGER

The camel and the needle, . . Is that then in your mind?

TOWNSMAN

Even so. The text Is Gospel-wisdom. I would ride the camel. . .

Yea leap him flying, through the needle's eye,

As easily as such a pamper'd soul Could pass the narrow gate.

STRANGER

Your pardon, Sir, 30 Looks not like Christian truth.

TOWNSMAN

Your pardon too, Sir, If, with this text before me, I should

feel In the preaching mood! But for these

barren fig-trees, With all their flourish and their leafiness. We have been told their destiny and

When the axe is laid unto the root, and thev

Cumber the earth no longer.

STRANGER

Was his wealth Stored fraudfully, . . the spoil of orphans wrong'd.

And widows who had none to plead their right?

TOWNSMAN

All honest, open, honourable gains, Fair legal interest, bonds and mortgages, Ships to the East and West.

STRANGER

Why judge you then So hardly of the dead?

TOWNSMAN

For what he left Undone: ... for sins, not one of which is written

In the Ten Commandments. He. I warrant him.

Believed no other Gods than those of the Creed:

Bow'd to no idols, . . but his moneybags;

Swore no false oaths, except at the custom-house:

Kept the Sabbath idle; built a monu-

To honour his dead father; did no murder:

Never sustain'd an action for crim-con: Never pick'd pockets; never bore falsewitness;

And never, with that all-commanding wealth.

nor ass !

STRANGER

You knew him then it seems?

TOWNSMAN

As all men know

The virtues of your hundred-thousanders :

They never hide their lights beneath a hushel.

STRANGER

Nay, nay, uncharitable Sir! for often Doth bounty like a streamlet flow un-

Freshening and giving life along its course.

TOWNSMAN

We track the streamlet by the brighter green

And livelier growth it gives : . . but as for this.

This was a pool that stagnated and stunk;

The rains of heaven engendered nothing

But slime and foul corruption.

STRANGER

Vet even these Are reservoirs whence public charity Still keeps her channels full.

TOWNSMAN

Now, Sir, you touch Upon the point. This man of half a million

Had all these public virtues which you praise:

But the poor man rung never at his

And the old beggar, at the public gate, Who, all the summer long, stands hat in hand.

He knew how vain it was to lift an eye To that hard face. Yet he was always found

Among your ten and twenty pound subscribers.

Your benefactors in the newspapers. His alms were money put to interest Coveted his neighbour's house, nor ox, In the other world, ... donations to keep open

A running charity account with heaven, . . 80

Retaining fees against the Last Assizes, When, for the trusted talents, strict account

Shall be required from all, and the old Arch-Lawyer

Plead his own cause as plaintiff.

STRANGER

I must needs Believe you, Sir: . . these are your witnesses,

These mourners here, who from their carriages

Gape at the gaping crowd. A good
March wind

Were to be pray'd for now, to lend their eyes

Some decent rheum; the very hireling mute

Bears not a face more blank of all emotion 90

Than the old servant of the family! How can this man have lived, that thus his death

Costs not the soiling one white handkerchief!

TOWNSMAN

Who should lament for him, Sir, in whose heart

Love had no place, nor natural charity? The parlour spaniel, when she heard his step.

Rose slowly from the hearth, and stole aside

With creeping pace; she never raised her eyes

To woo kind words from him, nor laid her head

Upraised upon his knee, with fondling whine.

How could it be but thus? Arithmetic

Was the sole science he was ever taught; The multiplication-table was his Creed, His Pater-noster, and his Decalogue. When yet he was a boy, and should have

breathed

The open air and sunshine of the fields, To give his blood its natural spring and play,

He in a close and dusky countinghouse

Smoke-dried and sear'd and shrivell'd up his heart.

So from the way in which he was train'd

His feet departed not; he toil'd and moil'd,

Poor muck-worm! through his threescore years and ten;

And when the earth shall now be shovell'd on him,

If that which served him for a soul were

Within its husk, 'twould still be dirt to dirt.

STRANGER

Yet your next newspapers will blazon him

For industry and honourable wealth A bright example.

TOWNSMAN

Even half a million Gets him no other praise. But come this way

Some twelve months hence, and you will find his virtues

Trimly set forth in lapidary lines, Faith with her torch beside, and little

Faith with her torch beside, and little
Cupids

Dropping upon his urn their marble tears.

Bristol 1803.

THE DEVIL'S WALK

ADVERTISEMENT

AFTER the Devil's Thoughts had been published by Mr. Coleridge in the collection of his Poetical Works, and the statement with which he accompanied it, it might have been supposed that the joint authorship of that Siamese production had been sufficiently authenticated, and that no suppositious claim to it would again be advanced. The following extract, however, appeared in the John Bull of Feb. 14, 1830:—

- 'In the Morning Post of Tuesday, we find the following letter:—
 - "To the Editor of the Morning Post.
- "SIR,—Permit me to correct a statement which appeared in a recent number of the John Bull, wherein it is made to appear that Dr. Southey is the author of the Poem entitled The Devil's Walk. I have the means of settling this question; since I possess the identical MS. copy of verses, as they were written by my uncle, the late Professor Porson, during an evening party at Dr. Beloe's.
 - "I am Sir, your very obedient Servant, "R. C. PORSON.
 - " Bayswater Terrace, Feb. 6, 1830."
- 'We are quite sure that Mr. Porson, the writer of the above letter, is convinced of the truth of the statement it contains; but although The Devil's Walk is perhaps not a work of which either Mr. Southey or Mr. Porson need be very proud, we feel it due to ourselves to re-state the fact of its being from the pen of Mr. Southey. If we are wrong, Mr. Porson may apply to Mr. Southey; for although Mr. Porson's eminent uncle is dead, the Poet Laureate is alive and merry.
- 'The Lines—Poem they can scarcely be called—were written by Mr. Southey, one morning before breakfast, the idea having Miller, 137 Oxford S struck him while he was shaving; they and Co., Edinburgh.'

were subsequently shown to Mr. Coleridge, who, we believe, pointed some of the stanzas, and perhaps added one or two.

'We beg to assure Mr. R. C. Porson that we recur to this matter out of no disrespect either to the memory of his uncle, which is not likely to be affected one way or another by the circumstance; or to his own veracity, being, as we said, quite assured that he believes the statement he makes: our only object is to set ourselves right.'

'Our readers, perhaps, may smile at the following, which appears in yesterday's Court Journal:—

"We have received a letter, signed 'W. Marshall,' and dated 'York'; claiming for its writer the long-contested authorship of those celebrated verses, which are known by the title of *The Devil's Walk on Earth*, and to which attention has lately been directed anew, by Lord Byron's imitation of them. There have been so many mystifications connected with the authorship of these clever verses, that, for any thing we know to the contrary, this letter may be only one more."

A week afterwards there was the following notice:—'We cannot waste any more time about The Devil's Walk. We happen to know that it is Mr. Southey's; but, as he alive, we refer any body, who is not yet satisfied, to the eminent person himself—we do not mean the Devil—but the Doctor.'

The same newspaper contained the ensuing advertisement:—'On Tuesday next, uniform with Robert Cruikshank's Monsieur Tonson, price one shilling: The Devil's Walk, a Poem, by Professor Porson. With additions and variations by Southey and Coleridge; illustrated by seven engravings from R. Cruikshank. London, Marsh and Miller, 137 Oxford Street; and Constable and Co.. Edinburgh.'

Professor Porson never had any part in these verses as a writer, and it is for the first time that he now appears in them as the subject of two or three stanzas written some few years ago, when the fabricated story of his having composed them during an evening party at Dr. Vincent's (for that was the original habitat of this falsehood) was revived. A friend of one of the authors, more jealous for him than he has ever been for himself, urged him then to put the

matter out of doubt (for it was before Mr. Coleridge had done so); and as much to please that friend, as to amuse himself and his domestic circle, in a sportive mood, the part which relates the rise and progress of the Poem was thrown off, and that also touching the aforesaid Professor. The old vein having thus been opened, some other passages were added; and so it grew to its present length.

THE DEVIL'S WALK

[First printed in The Morning Post, September 6, 1799. See Notes.]

FROM his brimstone bed at break of day A walking the Devil is gone,

To look at his little snug farm of the World.

And see how his stock went on.

Over the hill and over the dale, And he went over the plain; And backward and forward he swish'd his tail.

As a gentleman swishes a canc.

How then was the Devil drest? Oh, he was in his Sunday's best, His coat was red and his breeches were

And there was a hole where his tail came through.

A lady drove by in her pride, In whose face an expression he spied For which he could have kiss'd her; Such a flourishing, fine, clever creature was she.

With an eye as wicked as wicked can

I should take her for my Aunt, thought

If my dam had had a sister.

He met a lord of high degree. No matter what was his name; Whose face with his own when he came

to compare

The expression, the look, and the

And the character too, as it seem'd to a hair.—

Such a twin-likeness there was in the pair

That it made the Devil start and stare.

For he thought there was surely a looking-glass there,

But he could not see the frame.

He saw a Lawyer killing a viper On a dunghill beside his stable; Ho! quoth he, thou put'st me in mind Of the story of Cain and Abel.

An Apothecary on a white horse Rode by on his vocation; And the Devil thought of his old friend Death in the Revelation.

He pass'd a cottage with a double coachhouse. A cottage of gentility!

And he own'd with a grin That his favourite sin Is pride that apes humility.

40

He saw a pig rapidly
Down a river float;
The pig swam well, but every stroke
Was cutting his own throat;

10

And Satan gave thereat his tail
A twirl of admiration;
For he thought of his daughter War
And her suckling babe Taxation.

11

Well enough, in sooth, he liked that truth, 50
And nothing the worse for the jest;

But this was only a first thought
And in this he did not rest:

Another came presently into his head, And here it proved, as has often been said,

That second thoughts are best.

12

For as Piggy plied with wind and tide, His way with such celerity, And at every stroke the water dyed With his own red blood, the Devil cried, Behold a swinish nation's pride 61 In cotton-spun prosperity.

13

He walk'd into London leisurely,
The streets were dirty and dim:
But there he saw Brothers the Prophet,
And Brothers the Prophet saw him.'

14

He entered a thriving bookseller's shop; Quoth he, We are both of one college, For I myself sate like a Cormorant once Upon the Tree of Knowledge. 70

15

As he passed through Cold-Bath Fields he look'd

At a solitary cell;

And he was well-pleased, for it gave him a hint

For improving the prisons of Hell.

1 'After this I was in a vision, having the angel of God near me, and saw Satan walking leisurely into London.'—Brothers' Prophecies, part i, p. 41.

16

He saw a turnkey tie a thief's hands With a cordial tug and jerk; Nimbly, quoth he, a man's fingers move When his heart is in his work.

17

He saw the same turnkey unfettering a man

With little expedition; 80
And he chuckled to think of his dear slave trade.

And the long debates and delays that were made

Concerning its abolition.

18

He met one of his favourite daughters
By an Evangelical Meeting;
And forgetting himself for joy at her
sight,

He would have accosted her outright, And given her a fatherly greeting.

19

But she tipt him a wink, drew back, and cried,

Avaunt! my name's Religion! 90
And then she turn'd to the preacher
And leer'd like a love-sick pigeon.

20

A fine man and a famous Professor was he.

As the great Alexander now may be,
Whose fame not yet o'erpast is;
Or that new Scotch performer
Who is fiercer and warmer,
The great Sir Arch-Bombastes.

21

With throbs and throes, and ahsand ohs,
Far famed his flock for frightening;
And thundering with his voice, the
while

His eyes zigzag like lightning.

22

This Scotch phenomenon, I trow,
Beats Alexander hollow;
Even when most tame
He breathes more flame
Than ten Fire-Kings could swallow.

Another daughter he presently met:
With music of fife and drum,
And a consecrated flag,
And shout of tag and rag,
And march of rank and file,
Which had fill'd the crowded aisle
Of the venerable pile,
From church he saw her come.

24

He call'd her aside, and began to chide,
For what dost thou here? said he;
My city of Rome is thy proper home,
And there's work enough there for
thee.

25

Thou hast confessions to listen,
And bells to christen,
121
And altars and dolls to dress;
And fools to coax,
And sinners to hoax,
And beads and bones to bless;
And great pardons to sell
For those who pay well,
And small ones for those who pay less.

26

Nay, Father, I boast, that this is my post,

She answered; and thou wilt allow,
That the great Harlot,
Who is clothed in scarlet,
Can very well spare me now.

27

Upon her business I am come here, That we may extend her powers; Whatever lets down this church that we hate, Is something in favour of ours.

28

You will not think, great Cosmocrat!
That I spend my time in fooling;
Many irons, my Sire, have we in the fire,
And I must leave none of them
cooling;
For you must know state-councils here
Are held which I bear rule in.

When my liberal notions
Produce mischievous motions,
There's many a man of good intent,
In either house of Parliament,
Whom I shall find a tool in;
And I have hopeful pupils too.
Who all this while are schooling.

29

Fine progress they make in our liberal opinions, 151
My Utilitarians,

My all sorts of —inians
And all sorts of —arians;
My all sorts of —ists,
And my Prigs and my Whigs
Who have all sorts of twists
Train'd in the very way, I know,
Father, you would have them go;
High and low,
Wise and foolish, great and small,
March-of-Intellect-Boys all.

30

Well pleased wilt thou be at no very far day
When the caldron of mischief boils,
And I bring them forth in battle array
And both them suspend their broils,

That they may unite and fall on the prey,

For which we are spreading our toils.

How the nice boys all will give mouth at the call,

Hark away! hark away to the spoils! 170 My Macs and my Quacks and my law-

less-Jacks, My Sheils and O'Connells, my pious

Mac-Donnells,
My joke-smith Sydney, and all of his
kidney,

My Humes and my Broughams,
My merry old Jerry,
My Lord Kings, and my Doctor

Doyles!

31

At this good news, so great
The Devil's pleasure grew,
That with a joyful swish he rent
The hole where his tail came through.

His countenance fell for a moment 181 When he felt the stitches go;
Ah! thought he, there's a job now
That I've made for my tailor below.

33

Great news! bloody news! cried a newsman; The Devil said, Stop, let me see!

The Devil said, Stop, let me see!
Great news? bloody news? thought
the Devil,

The bloodier the better for me.

34

So he bought the newspaper, and no news

At all for his money he had. 190 Lying varlet, thought he, thus to take in old Nick!

But it's some satisfaction, my lad, To know thou art paid beforehand for the trick,

For the sixpence I gave thee is bad.

35

And then it came into his head
By oracular inspiration,
That what he had seen and what he had
said,

In the course of this visitation, Would be published in the Morning Post For all this reading nation. 200

36

Therewith in second-sight he saw
The place and the manner and time,
In which this mortal story
Would be put in immortal rhyme.

37

That it would happen when two poets
Should on a time be met,
In the town of Nether Stowey,
In the shire of Somerset:

38

There while the one was shaving
Would he the song begin; 210
And the other when he heard it at
breakfast,
In ready accord join in.

39

So each would help the other
Two heads being better than one;
And the phrase and conceit
Would in unison meet,
And so with glee the verse flow free,
In ding-dong chime of sing-song
rhyme,

Till the whole were merrily done.

40

And because it was set to the razor,
Not to the lute or harp,
Therefore it was that the fancy
Should be bright, and the wit be sharp.

41

But then, said Satan to himself, As for that said beginner, Against my infernal Majesty There is no greater sinner.

42

He hath put me in ugly ballads
With libellous pictures for sale;
He hath scoff'd at my hoofs and my
horns,
And has made very free with my tail.

43

But this Mister Poet shall find
I am not a safe subject for whim;
For I'll set up a School of my own,
And my Poets shall set upon him.

44

He went to a coffee-house to dine,
And there he had soy in his dish;
Having ordered some soles for his
dinner,

Because he was fond of flat fish.

45

They are much to my palate, thought he, 240
And now guess the reason who can,

Why no bait should be better than place,

When I fish for a Parliament-man.

But the soles in the bill were ten shillings;

Tell your master, quoth he, what I

If he charges at this rate for all things, He must be in a pretty good way.

47

But mark ye, said he to the waiter, I'm a dealer myself in this line, And his business, between you and me, Nothing like so extensive as mine. 251

48

Now soles are exceedingly cheap;
Which he will not attempt to deny,
When I see him at my fish-market,
I warrant him, by and by.

49

As he went along the Strand

Between three in the morning and
four

He observed a queer-looking person Who stagger'd from Perry's door.

50

And he thought that all the world over In vain for a man you might seek, 26r Who could drink more like a Trojan Or talk more like a Greek.

51

The Devil then he prophesied
It would one day be matter of talk,
That with wine when smitten,
And with wit moreover being happily
bitten,

This erudite bibber was he who had written

The story of this walk.

52

A pretty mistake, quoth the Devil;
A pretty mistake I opine! 271
I have put many ill thoughts in his mouth,

He will never put good ones in mine.

53

And whoever shall say that to Porson These best of all verses belong, He is an untruth-telling whoreson, And so shall be call'd in the song.

54

And if seeking an illicit connection with fame,

Any one else should put in a claim, In this comical competition; 280 That excellent poem will prove A man-trap for such foolish ambi-

tion,

Where the silly rogue shall be caught by the leg,

And exposed in a second edition.

55

Now the morning air was cold for him

Who was used to a warm abode; And yet he did not immediately wish To set out on his homeward road.

56

For he had some morning calls to make

Before he went back to Hell; 290 So, thought he, I'll step into a gaminghouse.

And that will do as well;

But just before he could get to the door

A wonderful chance befell.

57

For all on a sudden, in a dark place, He came upon General ———'s burning face:

And it struck him with such consternation.

That home in a hurry his way did he

Because he thought by a slight mis-

'Twas the general conflagration. 30

INSCRIPTIONS

'The three utilities of Poetry: the praise of Virtue and Goodness, the memory of things remarkable, and to invigorate the Affections.'—Welsh Triad.

[As five of the inscriptions have been inserted among the Selected Minor Poems, it has been necessary in some instances to alter the numbering of those here printed. Where this has been done, a number in brackets () at the head of an inscription denotes its number in the edition of 1837–1838.

Inscriptions I-VI inclusive were published in *Poems*, 1797. I, II, and III have been

almost rewritten.]

T

FOR A COLUMN AT NEWBURY

CALLEST thou thyself a Patriot? . . On this field

Did Falkland fall, the blameless and the brave.

Beneath the banners of that Charles whom thou

Abhorrest for a Tyrant. Dost thou boast

Of loyalty? The field is not far off Where in rebellious arms against his

King

Hambden was kill'd, that Hambden at whose name

The heart of many an honest Englishman

Beats with congenial pride. Both uncorrupt,

Friends to their common country both, they fought,

They died in adverse armies. Traveller!

If with thy neighbour thou shouldst not accord.

Remember these, our famous countrymen.

And quell all angry and injurious thoughts.

Bristol, 1796.

П

FOR A CAVERN THAT OVERLOOKS THE RIVER AVON

Enter this cavern, Stranger! Here awhile

Respiring from the long and steep ascent,

Thou may'st be glad of rest, and haply too

Of shade, if from the summer's westering sun

Shelter'd beneath this beetling vault of rock.

Round the rude portal clasping its rough arms

The antique ivy spreads a canopy,

From whose grey blossoms the wild bees collect

In autumn their last store. The Muses

This spot; believe a Poet who hath felt Their visitation here. The tide below Rising or refluent scarcely sends its sound

Of waters up; and from the heights beyond

Where the high-hanging forest waves and sways,

Varying before the wind its verdant hues.

The voice is music here. Here thou may'st feel

How good, how lovely, Nature! And when hence

Returning to the city's crowded streets, Thy sickening eye at every step revolts From scenes of vice and wretchedness, reflect 20

That Man creates the evil he endures.

Bristol, 1796.

TII

FOR A TABLET AT SILBURY-

This mound in some remote and dateless day

Rear'd o'er a Chieftain of the Age of Hills.

May here detain thee, Traveller! from thy road

Not idly lingering. In his narrow house Some warrior sleeps below, whose gallant deeds

Haply at many a solemn festival

The Scald hath sung; but perish'd is the song

Of praise, as o'er these bloak and barren downs

The wind that passes and is heard no more.

Go, Traveller, and remember when the pomp

Of earthly Glory fades, that one good deed,

Unseen, unheard, unnoted by mankind, Lives in the eternal register of Heaven. Bristol, 1796.

IV

FOR A MONUMENT IN THE NEW FOREST

This is the place where William's kingly power

Did from their poor and peaceful homes expel,

Unfriended, desolate, and shelterless, The habitants of all the fertile track

Far as these wilds extend. He levell'd

Their little cottages, he bade their

Lie waste, and forested the land, that so More royally might he pursue his sports.

If that thine heart be human, Passenger!

Sure it will swell within thee, and thy lips

Will mutter curses on him. Think thou then

What cities flame, what hosts unsepulchred

Pollute the passing wind, when raging Power

Drives on his blood-hounds to the chase of Man:

And as thy thoughts anticipate that day

When God shall judge aright, in charity Pray for the wicked rulers of mankind. Bristol, 1796.

V

FOR A TABLET ON THE BANKS OF A STREAM

STRANGER! awhile upon this mossy bank

Recline thee. If the Sun rides high, the breeze,

That loves to ripple o'er the rivulet, Will play around thy brow, and the cool sound

Of running waters soothe thee. Mark how clear

They sparkle o'er the shallows, and behold

Where o'er their surface wheels with restless speed

You glossy insect, on the sand below

How its swift shadow flits. In solitude The rivulet is pure, and trees and herbs

Bend o'er its salutary course refresh'd, But passing on amid the haunts of men,

It finds pollution there, and rolls from thence

A tainted stream. Seek'st thou for HAPPINESS?

Go, Stranger, sojourn in the woodland

Of Innocence, and thou shalt find her there.

Bristol, 1796.

VI

FOR THE CENOTAPH AT ERMENONVILLE

STRANGER! the MAN of NATURE lies not here:

Enshrin'd far distant by the Scoffer's 1

His relics rest, there by the giddy throng With blind idolatry alike revered.

With blind idolatry alike revered.
Wiselier directed have thy pilgrim feet
Explored the scenes of Ermenonville.

Rousseau
Loved these calm haunts of Solitude and

Peace;

Here he has heard the murmurs of the lake,

And the soft rustling of the poplar grove, When o'er its bending boughs the passing wind

Swept a grey shade. Here, if thy breast be full,

If in thine eye the tear devout should gush,

His Spirit shall behold thee, to thine home

From hence returning, purified of heart. Bristol. 1796.

VII

FOR A MONUMENT AT OXFORD

[First published in The Oracle, afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

HERE Latimer and Ridley in the flames Bore witness to the truth. If thou hast walk'd

Uprightly through the world, just thoughts of joy

May fill thy breast in contemplating here

Congenial virtue. But if thou hast swerved

From the straight path of even rectitude, Fearful in trying seasons to assert

The better cause, or to forsake the worse

¹ Voltaire.

Reluctant, when perchance therein enthrall'd

Slave to false shame, oh! thankfully receive 10

The sharp compunctious motions that this spot

May wake within thee, and be wise in time,

And let the future for the past atone.

Bath, 1797.

VIII

FOR A MONUMENT IN THE VALE OF EWIAS

[First published in The Morning Post, December 21, 1798; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

HERE was it, Stranger, that the patron Saint

Of Cambria pass'd his age of penitence, A solitary man; and here he made

His hermitage, the roots his food, his drink

Of Hodney's mountain stream. Perchance thy youth

Has read with eager wonder how the Knight

Of Wales in Ormandine's enchanted bower

Slept the long sleep: and if that in thy

Flow the pure blood of Britain, sure that blood

Hath flow'd with quicker impulse at the

Of David's deeds, when through the press of war

His gallant comrades follow'd his green

To victory. Stranger! Hatterill's mountain heights

And this fair vale of Ewias, and the stream

Of Hodney, to thine after-thoughts will rise

More grateful, thus associate with the name

Of David and the deeds of other days.

Bath, 1798.

TX

EPITAPH ON ALGERNON SIDNEY

[First published in The Morning Post, December 25, 1798; afterwards in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

HERE Sidney lies, he whom perverted

The pliant jury and the bloody judge, Doom'd to a traitor's death. A tyrant King

Required, an abject country saw and shared

The crime. The noble cause of Liberty He loved in life, and to that noble cause In death bore witness. But his country rose

Like Samson from her sleep, and broke her chains,

And proudly with her worthies she enroll'd

Her murder'd Sidney's name. The voice of man

Gives honour or destroys; but earthly power

Gives not, nor takes away, the selfapplause

Which on the scaffold suffering virtue feels,

Nor that which God appointed its reward.

Westbury, 1798.

X

EPITAPH ON KING JOHN

[First published in The Morning Post, May 28, 1798; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

John rests below. A man more infamous

Never hath held the sceptre of these realms,

And bruised beneath the iron rod of Power

The oppressed men of England. Englishman!

Curse not his memory. Murderer as he was,

Coward and slave, yet he it was who sign'd

That Charter which should make thee morn and night

Be thankful for thy birth-place: . . Englishman!

That holy Charter, which, shouldst thou permit

Force to destroy, or Fraud to undermine, 20 Thy children's groans will persecute thy

soul,

For they must been the hurthen of the

For they must bear the burthen of thy crime.

Westbury, 1798.

XI (XII)

FOR A MONUMENT AT TORDESILLAS

[Published in Letters from Spain and Portugal, 1797.]

SPANIARD! if thou art one who bows the knee

Before a despot's footstool, hie thee hence!

This ground is holy: here Padilla died, Martyr of Freedom. But if thou dost love

Her cause, stand then as at an altar here,

And thank the Almighty that thine honest heart.

Full of a brother's feelings for mankind, Revolts against oppression. Not unheard

Nor unavailing shall the grateful prayer Ascend; for honest impulses will rise, to Such as may elevate and strengthen thee

For virtuous action. Relics silvershrined.

And chaunted mass, would wake within the soul

Thoughts valueless and cold compared with these.

Bristol, 1796.

XII (XIII)

FOR A COLUMN AT TRUXILLO

[Published in Letters from Spain and Portugal, 1797.]

Pizarro here was born: a greater name The list of Glory boasts not. Toil and Pain.

Famine and hostile Elements, and Hosts

Embattled, fail'd to check him in his

Not to be wearied, not to be deterr'd. Not to be overcome. A mighty realm He over-ran, and with relentless arm Slew or enslaved its unoffending sons. And wealth, and power, and fame, were his rewards.

There is another world, beyond the

According to their deeds where men are judged.

O Reader! if thy daily bread be earn'd By daily labour, ... yea, however low, However painful be thy lot assign'd. Thank thou, with deepest gratitude, the

Who made thee, that thou art not such as he.

Bristol, 1796.

XIII (XIV)

FOR THE CELL OF HONORIUS, AT THE CORK CONVENT, NEAR CINTRA

[First published in The Morning Post, November 5, 1798.]

HERE cavern'd like a beast Honorius pass'd

In self-affliction, solitude, and prayer, Long years of penance. He had rooted out

All human feelings from his heart, and

With fear and loathing from all human

divine

Hath Christ enjoin'd. To aid the father-

Comfort the sick, and be the poor man's friend.

And in the wounded heart pour gospelbalm:

These are the injunctions of his holy

Which whose keeps shall have a joy on earth.

Calm, constant, still increasing, preluding

The eternal bliss of Heaven. Yet mock not thou.

Stranger, the Anchorite's mistaken zeal! He painfully his painful duties kept.

Sincere though erring: Stranger, do thou keep

Thy better and thine easier rule as well. Bristol, 1798.

XIV (XV)

FOR A MONUMENT AT TAUNTON

[First published in The Morning Post, July 6, 1799; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.1

THEY suffer'd here whom Jefferies doom'd to death

In mockery of all justice, when the

Unjust, subservient to a cruel King, Perform'd his work of blood. They suffer'd here

The victims of that Judge, and of that King;

In mockery of all justice here they bled.

Unheard. But not unpitied, nor of

Unseen, the innocent suffered; not unheard

The innocent blood cried vengeance; for at length,

The indignant Nation in its power arose.

Resistless. Then that wicked Judge took flight.

Not thus in making known his will Disguised in vain: . . not always is the \mathbf{Lord}

Slow to revenge! A miserable man He fell beneath the people's rage, and still

The children curse his memory. From the throne

The obdurate bigot who commission'd him,
Inhuman James, was driven. He lived

to drag

Long years of frustrate hope, he lived to load

More blood upon his soul. Let tell the Boyne,

Let Londonderry tell his guilt and shame; 20

And that immortal day when on thy shores,

La Hogue, the purple ocean dash'd the dead!

Westbury, 1798.

XV (XVI)

FOR A TABLET AT PENSHURST

[First published in The Morning Post, December 7, 1798; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

Are days of old familiar to thy mind,
O Reader? Hast thou let the midnight

Pass unperceived, whilst thou in fancy lived

With high-born beauties and enamour'd chiefs.

Sharing their hopes, and with a breathless joy

Whose expectation touch'd the verge of pain.

Following their dengerous fortunes? If

Following their dangerous fortunes? If such lore

Hath ever thrill'd thy bosom, thou wilt tread.

As with a pilgrim's reverential thoughts, The groves of Penshurst. Sidney here was born.

Sidney, than whom no gentler, braver

His own delightful genius ever feign'd, Illustrating the vales of Arcady With courteous courage and with loyal loves.

Upon his natal day an acorn here

Was planted: it grew up a stately oak, And in the beauty of its strength it stood

And flourish'd, when his perishable part Had moulder'd, dust to dust. That stately oak

Itself hath moulder'd now, but Sidney's

Endureth in his own immortal works.

Westbury, 1799.

XVI (XVII) EPITAPH

This to a mother's sacred memory Her son hath hallow'd. Absent many a year

Far over sea, his sweetest dreams were still

Of that dear voice which soothed his infancy:

And after many a fight against the Moor And Malabar, or that fierce cavalry Which he had seen accessing the bound

Which he had seen covering the boundless plain,

Even to the utmost limits where the eye Could pierce the far horizon, . . his first thought

In safety was of her, who when she heard

The tale of that day's danger, would retire

And pour her pious gratitude to Heaven In prayers and tears of joy. The lingering hour

Of his return, long-look'd-for, came at length,

And full of hope he reach'd his native shore.

Vain hope that puts its trust in human

For ere he came, the number of her days Was full. O Reader, what a world were this.

How unendurable its weight, if they

Whom Death hath sunder'd did not meet again!

Keswick, 1810.

XVII (XIX)

FOR A MONUMENT AT ROLISSA

Time has been when Rolissa was a name

Ignoble, by the passing traveller heard And then forthwith forgotten: now in

It is renown'd. For when to her ally.

In bondage by perfidious France op-

England sent succour, first within this

The fated theatre of their long strife Confronted, here the hostile nations

Laborde took here his stand; upon yon

Of Mount Saint Anna was his Eagle

The veteran chief, disposing well all

Of height and glen, possess'd the mountain straits.

A post whose strength thus mann'd and profited

Seem'd to defy the enemy and make The vantage of assailing numbers vain.

Here, too, before the sun should bend his course

Adown the slope of heaven, so had their

Been timed, he look'd for Loison's army. rich

With spoils from Evora and Beja sack'd.

That hope the British Knight areeding

With prompt attack prevented; and nor strength

Of ground, nor leader's skill discipline Of soldiers practised in the ways of

Avail'd that day against the British And babes were taught to bless Sir arm.

Resisting long, but beaten from their stand.

The French fell back: they join'd their greater host

To suffer fresh defeat, and Portugal First for Sir Arthur wreathed her laurels here.

XVIII (XX)

FOR A MONUMENT AT VIMEIRO

This is Vimeiro; yonder stream which

Westward through heathery highlands to the sea.

Is call'd Maceira, till of late a name, Save to the dwellers of this peaceful

Known only to the coasting mariner; Now in the bloody page of war inscribed.

When to the aid of injured Portugal Struggling against the intolerable yoke Of treacherous France, England, her old

Long tried and always faithful found, went forth.

The embattled hosts in equal strength array'd,

And equal discipline, encountered here. Junot, the mock Abrantes, led the French.

And confident of skill so oft approved, And vaunting many a victory, advanced Against an untried foe. But when the ranks

Met in the shock of battle, man to

And bayonet to bayonet opposed,

The flower of France, cut down along their line.

Fell like ripe grass before the mower's scythe.

For the strong arm and rightful cause prevail'd.

That day deliver'd Lisbon from the yoke,

Arthur's name.

XIX (XXI) AT CORUÑA

WHEN from these shores the British army first

Boldly advanced into the heart of Spain. The admiring people who beheld its march

Call'd it 'the Beautiful'. And surely well

Its proud array, its perfect discipline, Its ample furniture of war complete,

Its powerful horse, its men of British mould,

All high in heart and hope, all of themselves

Assured, and in their leaders confident. Deserved the title. Few short weeks elapsed

Ere hither that disastrous host return'd. A fourth of all its gallant force con-

In hasty and precipitate retreat,

Stores, treasure, and artillery, in the

Left to the fierce pursuer, horse and man Founder'd, and stiffening on the mountain snows.

But when the exulting enemy approach'd

Boasting that he would drive into the

The remnant of the wretched fugitives, Here, ere they reach'd their ships, they turn'd at bay.

Then was the proof of British courage seen:

Against a foe far overnumbering them, An insolent foe, rejoicing in pursuit,

Sure of the fruit of victory, whatsoe'er

Might be the fate of battle, here they

And their safe embarkation, . . all they sought.

Won manfully. That mournful day avenged

Their sufferings, and redeem'd their country's name :

And thus Coruña, which in this retreat Had seen the else indelible reproach 30 Of England, saw the stain effaced in Refused: he fought, he conquer'd, and blood.

XX (XXII) **EPITAPH**

HE who in this unconsecrated ground Obtain'd a soldier's grave, hath left a name

Which will endure in history: remains

Of Moore, the British General, rest below. His early prowess Corsica beheld,

When, at Mozello, bleeding, through the breach

He passed victorious; the Columbian

Then saw him tried; upon the sandy downs

Of Holland was his riper worth approved; And leaving on the Egyptian shores his blood.

He gathered there fresh palms. in repute

A gallant army last he led to Spain, In arduous times; for moving in his strength,

With all his mighty means of war complete,

The Tyrant Buonaparte bore down all Before him: and the British Chief be-

Where'er he look'd, rout, treason, and dismav.

All sides with all embarrassments beset, And danger pressing on. Hither he came

Before the far out-numbering hosts of France

Retreating to her ships, and close pursued:

Nor were there wanting men who counsell'd him

To offer terms, and from the enemy Purchase a respite to embark in peace,

At price of such abasement, . . even to this.

Brave as they were, by hopelessness subdued.

That shameful counsel Moore, in happy

Remembering what was due to England's name,

he fell.

XXI (XXIII)

TO THE MEMORY OF PAUL BURRARD

MORTALLY WOUNDED IN THE BATTLE OF CORUÑA

[Published in The Literary Souvenir for 1826.]

Mysterious are the ways of Providence!—

Old men who have grown grey in camps, and wish'd,

And pray'd, and sought in battle to lay down

The burthen of their age, have seen the young

Fall round, themselves untouch'd; and balls beside

The graceless and the unblest head have pass'd.

Harmless as hail, to reach some precious life.

For which clasp'd hands, and supplicating eyes,

Duly at morn and eve were raised to Heaven;

And, in the depth and loneness of the soul

(Then boding all too truly), midnight prayers

Breathed from an anxious pillow wet with tears.

But blessed, even amid their grief, are they

Who, in the hour of visitation, bow Beneath the unerring will, and look toward

Their Heavenly Father, merciful as just!

They, while they own his goodness, feel that whom

He chastens, them he loves. The cup he gives,

Shall they not drink it? Therefore doth the draught

Resent of comfort in its bitterness, 20 And carry healing with it. What but this Could have sustain'd the mourners who were left,

With life-long yearnings, to remember him

Whose early death this monumental

Records? For never more auspicious hopes

Were nipt in flower, nor finer qualities From goodliest fabric of mortality

Divorced, nor virtues worthier to adorn The world transferr'd to heaven, than when, ere time

Had measured him the space of nineteen years, 30

Paul Burrard on Coruña's fatal field Received his mortal hurt. Not unprepared

The heroic youth was found: for in the ways

Of piety had he been trained; and what

The dutiful child upon his mother's knees

Had learnt, the soldier faithfully observed.

In chamber or in tent, the Book of God

Was his beloved manual; and his life Beseem'd the lessons which from thence he drew.

For, gallant as he was, and blithe of heart,

Expert of hand, and keen of eye, and prompt

In intellect, religion was the crown

Of all his noble properties. When Paul Was by, the scoffer, self-abased, restrain'd

The license of his speech; and ribaldry Before his virtuous presence sate rebuked.

And yet so frank and affable a form His virtue wore, that wheresoe'er he moved

A sunshine of good-will and cheerfulness Enliven'd all around. Oh! marvel

If, in the morning of his fair career, Which promised all that honour could

bestow
On high desert, the youth was summon'd hence!

His soul required no farther discipline, Pure as it was, and capable of Heaven. Upon the spot from whence he just had seen

His General borne away, the appointed

Reach'd him. But not on that Gallician ground

Was it his fate, like many a British heart.

To mingle with the soil: the sea received 60

His mortal relics, . . to a watery grave Consign'd so near his native shore, so near

His father's house, that they who loved him best,

Unconscious of its import, heard the gun

Which fired his knell.—Alas! if it were known.

When, in the strife of nations, dreadful Death

Mows down with indiscriminating sweep

His thousands ten times told, . . if it were known

What ties are sever'd then, what ripening hopes

Blasted, what virtues in their bloom cut off;

How far the desolating scourge extends; How wide the misery spreads; what hearts beneath

Their grief are broken, or survive to feel

Always the irremediable loss;

Oh! who of woman born could bear the thought?

Who but would join with fervent piety
The prayer that asketh in our time for
peace?—

Nor in our time alone !—Enable us.

Father which art in heaven! but to receive

And keep thy word: thy kingdom then should come,

Thy will be done on earth; the victory Accomplished over Sin as well as Death.

And the great scheme of Providence fulfill'd.

XXII (XXIV)

FOR THE BANKS OF THE DOURO

CROSSING in unexampled enterprize

This great and perilous stream, the English host

Effected here their landing, on the day When Soult from Porto with his troops was driven.

No sight so joyful ever had been seen From Douro's banks, . . not when the

mountains sent
Their generous produce down, or homeward fleets

Entered from distant seas their port desired:

Nor e'er were shouts of such glad mariners

So gladly heard, as then the cannon's peal,

And short sharp strokes of frequent musketry,

By the delivered habitants that hour. For they who beaten then and routed fled

Before victorious England, in their day Of triumph, had, like fiends let loose from hell,

Fill'd you devoted city with all forms Of horror, all unutterable crimes;

And vengeance now had reach'd the inhuman race

Accurst. Oh what a scene did Night behold

Within those rescued walls, when festal

And torches, blazing through the bloody streets,

Stream'd their broad light where horse and man in death

Unheeded lay outstretch'd! Eyes which had wept

In bitterness so long, shed tears of joy, And from the broken heart thanksgiving mix'd

With anguish rose to Heaven. Sir Arthur then

Might feel how precious in a righteous

Is victory, how divine the soldier's meed, When grateful nations bless the avenging sword!

XXIII (XXV) TALAVERA

FOR THE FIELD OF BATTLE

You wide-extended town, whose roofs and towers

And poplar avenues are seen far off. In goodly prospect over scatter'd woods Of dusky ilex, boasts among its sons Of Mariana's name, . . he who hath

The splendid story of his country's wars Through all the European kingdoms known.

Yet in his ample annals thou canst find No braver battle chronicled, than here Was waged, when Joseph of the stolen crown

Against the hosts of England and of Spain

His veteran armies brought. Byveteran chiefs

Captain'd, a formidable force they came, Full fifty thousand. Victor led them on. A man grown grey in arms, nor e'er in aught

Dishonoured, till by this opprobrious

He over rude Alverche's summer stream

Winning his way, made first upon the

His hot attack, where Spain's raw levies, ranged

In double line, had taken their strong

In yonder broken ground, by olive groves

Cover'd and flank'd by Tagus. Soon from thence.

As one whose practised eve could appre-

All vantages in war, his troops he drew; And on this hill, the battle's vital point, Bore with collected power, outnumbering

The British ranks twice told. Such fearful odds

Were balanced by Sir Arthur's master

And by the British heart. Twice during Scattering, and lost in terror. Ill he night

The fatal spot they storm'd, and twice fell back. Before the bayonet driven. Again at morn

They made their fiery onset, and again Repell'd, again at noon renew'd the strife.

Yet was their desperate perseverance vain.

Where skill by equal skill was countervail'd.

And numbers by superior courage foil'd; And when the second night drew over

Its sheltering cope, in darkness they retired.

At all points beaten. Long in the red

Of war shall Talavera's famous name 40 Stand forth conspicuous. While that name endures,

Bear in thy soul, O Spain, the memory Of all thou sufferedst from perfidious France.

Of all that England in thy cause achieved.

XXIV (XXVI)

FOR THE DESERTO DE BUSACO

READER, thou standest upon holv ground

Which Penitence hath chosen for itself, And war disturbing the deep solitude Hath left it doubly sacred. On these heights

The host of Portugal and England stood, Arrayed against Massena, when the chief

Proud of Rodrigo and Almeida won, Press'd forward, thinking the devoted

Full sure should fall a prev. He in his pride

Scorn'd the poor numbers of the English

And thought the children of the land would fly

From his advance, like sheep before the

knew

The Lusitanian spirit! Ill he knew The arm, the heart of England! Ill he knew

Her Wellington! He learnt to know them here.

That spirit and that arm, that heart, that mind.

Here on Busaco gloriously display'd, When hence repulsed the beaten boaster wound

Below, his course circuitous, and left 20 His thousands for the beasts and ravenous fowl.

The Carmelite who in his cell recluse Was wont to sit, and from a skull receive Death's silent lesson, wheresoe'er he walk

Henceforth may find his teachers. He shall find

The Frenchmen's bones in glen and grove, on rock

And height, where'er the wolves and carrion birds

Have strewn them, wash'd in torrents, bare and bleach'd

By sun and rain and by the winds of heaven.

XXV (XXVII) FOR THE LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS

THROUGH all Iberia, from the Atlantic shores

To far Pyrene, Wellington hath left
His trophies; but no monument records
To after-time a more enduring praise,
Than this which marks his triumph here
attain'd

By intellect, and patience to the end Holding through good and ill its course assign'd,

The stamp and seal of greatness. Here the chief

Perceived in foresight Lisbon's sure defence,

A vantage ground for all reverse prepared, 10

Where Portugal and England might defy

All strength of hostile numbers. Not for this

Of hostile enterprise did he abate, Or gallant purpose: witness the proud

day

Which saw Soult's murderous host from Porto driven;

Bear witness Talavera, made by him Famous for ever; and that later fight, When from Busaco's solitude the birds, Then first affrighted in their sanctuary, Fled from the thunders and the fires of

But when Spain's feeble counsels, in delay

As erring, as in action premature,

Had left him in the field without support,

And Buonaparte, having trampled down The strength and pride of Austria, this way turn'd

His single thought and undivided power, Retreating hither the great General came;

And proud Massena, when the boastful chief

Of plundered Lisbon dreamt, here found himself

Stopt suddenly in his presumptuous course. 30

From Ericeyra on the western sea,
By Mafra's princely convent, and the
heights

Of Montichique, and Bucellas famed For generous vines, the formidable

Extending, rested on the guarded shores Of Tagus, that rich river who received

Into his ample and rejoicing port
The harvests and the wealth of distant
lands.

Secure, insulting with the glad display The robber's greedy sight. Five months the foe

Beheld these lines, made inexpugnable By perfect skill, and patriot feelings here With discipline conjoin'd, courageous hands.

True spirits, and one comprehensive

All overseeing and pervading all.

Five months, tormenting still his heart with hope.

He saw his projects frustrated; the power

Of the blaspheming tyrant whom he served
Fail in the proof; his thousands disap-

near.

In silent and inglorious war consumed; Till hence retreating, madden'd with despite,

Here did the self-styled Son of Victory

leave,

Never to be redeem'd, that vaunted name.

XXVI (XXVIII) AT SANTAREM

Four months Massena had his quarters here.

When by those lines deterr'd where Wellington

Defied the power of France, but loth to leave

Rich Lisbon yet unsack'd, he kept his ground,

Till from impending famine, and the

Array'd in front, and that consuming war

Which still the faithful nation, day and night.

And at all hours was waging on his rear, He saw no safety, save in swift retreat. Then of his purpose frustrated, this child

Of Hell, . . so fitlier than of Victory call'd,

Gave his own devilish nature scope, and let

His devilish army loose. The mournful rolls

That chronicle the guilt of humankind Tell not of aught more hideous than the deeds

With which this monster and his kindred troops

Track'd their inhuman way; all cruelties,

All forms of horror, all deliberate crimes, Which tongue abhors to utter, car to hear.

Let this memorial bear Massena's name For everlasting infamy inscribed.

XXVII (XXIX) AT FUENTES D'ONORO

THE fountains of Onoro which give name To this poor hamlet, were distain'd with blood.

What time Massena, driven from Portugal

By national virtue in endurance proved, And England's faithful aid, against the land

Not long delivered, desperately made His last fierce effort here. That day, bestreak'd

With slaughter Coa and Agueda ran, So deeply had the open veins of war Purpled their mountain feeders. Strong in means,

With rest, and stores, and numbers reinforced.

Came the ferocious enemy, and ween'd Beneath their formidable cavalry

To trample down resistance. But there fought

Against them here, with Britons side by side,

The children of regenerate Portugal, And their own crimes, and all-beholding Heaven.

Beaten, and hopeless thenceforth of success

The inhuman Marshal, never to be named

By Lusitanian lips without a curse 20 Of clinging infamy, withdrew and left These Fountains famous for his over-throw.

XXVIII (XXXI)

FOR A MONUMENT AT ALBUHERA

SEVEN thousand men lay bleeding on these heights,

When Beresford in strenuous conflict strove

Against a foe whom all the accidents
Of battle favoured, and who knew full
well

To seize all offers that occasion gave. Wounded or dead, seven thousand here were stretch'd. And on the plain around a myriad more,

Spaniard and Briton and true Portugueze,

Alike approved that day; and in the

Of France, with her flagitious sons compell'd,

Pole and Italian, German, Hollander, Men of all climes and countries, hither brought,

Doing and suffering, for the work of war.

This point by her superior cavalry France from the Spaniard won, the

Aiding her powerful efforts; here awhile

She seem'd to rule the conflict; and from hence

The British and the Lusitanian arm Dislodged with irresistible assault

The enemy, even when he deem'd the day 20

Was written for his own. But not for Soult,

But not for France was that day in the rolls

Of war to be inscribed by Victory's hand,

Not for the inhuman chief, and cause unjust;

She wrote for aftertimes in blood the names

Of Spain and England, Blake and Beresford.

XXIX (XXXII)

TO THE MEMORY OF SIR WILLIAM MYERS

SPANIARD or Portugueze! tread reverently

Upon a soldier's grave; no common heart

Lies mingled with the clod beneath thy feet.

To honours and to ample wealth was Myers

In England born; but leaving friends beloved,

And all allurements of that happy land, His ardent spirit to the field of war Impell'd him. Fair was his career. He faced

The perils of that memorable day,

When through the iron shower and fiery storm ro Of death the dauntless host of Britain

made

Their landing at Aboukir; then not

Illustrated, than when great Nelson's hand,

As if insulted Heaven with its own wrath

Had arm'd him, smote the miscreant Frenchmen's fleet,

And with its wreck wide-floating many a league

Strew'd the rejoicing shores. What then his youth

Held forth of promise, amply was confirm'd

When Wellesley, upon Talavera's plain, On the mock monarch won his coronet: There when the trophies of the field were reap'd

Was he for gallant bearing eminent
When all did bravely. But his valour's
orb

Shone brightest at its setting. On the field

Of Albuhera he the fusileers

Led to regain the heights, and promised them

A glorious day; a glorious day was given;

The heights were gain'd, the victory was achieved,

And Myers received from death his deathless crown.

Here to Valverde was he borne, and here 30

His faithful men amid this olive grove.
The olive emblem here of endless peace,
Laid him to rest. Spaniard or Portugueze.

In your good cause the British soldier fell;

Tread reverently upon his honour'd grave.

XXX (XXXIV)

FOR THE WALLS OF CIUDAD RODRIGO

HERE Craufurd fell, victorious, in the breach,

Leading his countrymen in that assault Which won from haughty France these rescued walls:

And here intomb'd far from his native land

And kindred dust, his honour'd relics rest.

Well was he versed in war, in the Orient train'd

Beneath Cornwallis; then for many a year

Following through arduous and ill-fated fields

The Austrian banners; on the sea-like shores

Of Plata next, still by malignant stars to Pursued; and in that miserable retreat, For which Coruña witness'd on her hills The pledge of vengeance given. At

length he saw,
Long woo'd and well deserved, the
brighter face

Of Fortune, upon Coa's banks vouchsafed.

Before Almeida, when Massena found The fourfold vantage of his numbers foil'd.

Before the Briton, and the Portugal, There vindicating first his old renown, And Craufurd's mind that day presiding there. 20

Again was her auspicious countenance Upon Busaco's holy heights reveal'd; And when by Torres Vedras, Wellington.

Wisely secure, defied the boastful French,

With all their power; and when Onoro's springs

Beheld that execrable enemy

Again chastised beneath the avenging arm.

Too early here his honourable course He closed, and won his noble sepulchre. Where should the soldier rest so worthily As where he fell? Be thou his monument, 31 O City of Rodrigo, yea be thou,

To latest time, his trophy and his tomb! Sultans, or Pharaohs of the elder world, Lie not in Mosque or Pyramid enshrined Thus gloriously, nor in so proud a grave.

XXXI (XXXV)

TO THE MEMORY OF MAJOR GENERAL MACKINNON

Son of an old and honourable house, Henry Mackinnon from the Hebrides Drew his descent, but upon English

ground
An English mother bore him. Dauphiny
Beheld the blossom of his opening years;
For hoping in that genial clime to save
A child of feebler frame, his parents
there

Awhile their sojourn fix'd: and thus it chanced

That in that generous season, when the

Yet from the world is pure and undefiled.

Napoleon Buonaparte was his friend. The adventurous Corsican, like Henry,

Young, and a stranger in the land of France.

Their frequent and their favour'd guest became.

Finding a cheerful welcome at all hours, Kindness, esteem, and in the English youth

Quick sympathy of apprehensive mind And lofty thought heroic. On the way Of life they parted, not to meet again. Each follow'd war, but, oh! how dif-

ferently
Did the two spirits which till now had
grown

Like two fair plants, it seem'd, of kindred seed.

Develope in that awful element!

For never had benignant nature shower'd

More bounteously than on Mackinnon's head

Her choicest gifts. tellect.

Were such as might at once command and win

All hearts. In all relationships approved.

Son, brother, husband, father, friend, his life

Was beautiful; and when in tented fields.

Such as the soldier should be in the sight Of God and man was he. Poor praise it

To speak his worth evinced upon the banks

Of Douro, Talavera's trophied plain, Busaco's summit, and what other days, Many and glorious all, illustrated

His bright career. Worthier of him to

That in the midst of camps his manly breast

Rotain'd its youthful virtue; that he walk'd

Through blood and evil uncontaminate. And that the stern necessity of war 41 But nurtured with its painful discipline Thoughtful compassion in that gentle

And feelings such as man should cherish still

For all of woman born. He met his death

When at Rodrigo on the breach he stood

Triumphant; to a soldier's wish it came Instant, and in the hour of victory.

Mothers and maids of Portugal, oh bring Your garlands here, and strew his grave with flowers:

And lead the children to his monument, Grey-headed sires, for it is holy ground! For tenderness and valour in his heart, As in your own Nunalures, had made Their habitation; for a dearer life Never in battle hath been offered up, Since in like cause and in unhappy day, By Zutphen's walls the peerless Sidney

'Tis said that Buonaparte, when he

How thus, among the multitude whose | Sound his reveille. blood

Form, features, in- Cries out to Heaven upon his guilty head.

> His early friend had fallen, was touch'd with grief.

> If aught it may avail him, be that

thought. That brief recurrence of humanity

In his hard heart, remember'd in his hour.

XXXII (XXXVI)

FOR THE AFFAIR AT ARROYO MOLINOS

HE who may chronicle Spain's arduous strife

Against the Intruder, hath to speak of fields

Profuselier fed with blood, and victories Borne wider on the wings of glad report; Yet shall this town, which from the mill-stream takes

Its humble name, be storied as the spot Where the vain Frenchman, insolent too long

Of power and of success, first saw the strength

Of England in prompt enterprize essaved,

And felt his fortunes ebb, from that day forth Swept back upon the refluent tide of war.

Girard lay here, who late from Caceres, Far as his active cavalry could scour.

Had pillaged and opprest the country round; The Spaniard and the Portugueze he

scorn'd. And deem'd the British soldiers all too

To seize occasion, unalert in war,

And therefore brave in vain. In such belief

Secure at night he laid him down to sleep,

Nor dreamt that these disparaged enemies With drum and trumpet should in

martial charge All day their march

severe

They held through wind and drenching rain; all night

The autumnal tempest unabating raged, While in their comfortless and open camp

They cheer'd themselves with patient hope: the storm

Was their ally, and moving in the mist, When morning open'd, on the astonish'd foe

They burst. Soon routed horse and foot, the French

On all sides scattering, fled, on every side 30

Beset, and every where pursued, with

Of half their numbers captured, their whole stores,

And all their gather'd plunder. 'Twas a day

Of surest omen, such as fill'd with joy True English hearts. . . No happier peals have e'er

Been roll'd abroad from town and village tower

Than gladden'd then with their exultant

Salopian vales; and flowing cups were brimm'd

All round the Wrekin to Sir Rowland's name.

XXXIII (XXXVII)

WRITTEN IN AN UNPUBLISHED VOLUME OF LETTERS AND MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS, BY BARRÉ CHARLES ROBERTS.

Nor often hath the cold insensate earth Closed over such fair hopes, as when the grave

Received young Barré's perishable part; Nor death destroyed so sweet a dream of life.

Nature, who sometimes lavisheth her gifts

With fatal bounty, had conferred on him Even such endowments as parental love Might in its wisest prayer have ask'd of Heaven;

An intellect that, choosing for itself

The better part, went forth into the fields

Of knowledge, and with never-sated thirst

Drank of the living springs; a judgement calm

And clear; a heart affectionate; a soul Within whose quiet sphere no vanities Or low desires had place. Nor were the seeds

Of excellence thus largely given, and left To struggle with impediment of clime Austere, or niggard soil; all circumstance

Of happy fortune was to him vouchsafed:

His way of life was as through gardenwalks 20

Wherein no thorns are seen, save such as grow,

Types of our human state, with fruits and flowers.

In all things favoured thus auspiciously, But in his father most. An intercourse So beautiful no former record shows

In such relationship displayed, where through

Familiar friendship's perfect confidence, The father's ever-watchful tenderness Meets ever in the son's entire respect Its due return devout, and playful love Mingles with every thing, and sheds o'er

all 31
A sunshine of its own. Should we then

A sunshine of its own. Should we then

The parents purchased at too dear a cost This deep delight, the deepest, purest joy Which Heaven hath here assign'd us, when they saw

Their child of hope, just in the May of life.

Beneath a slow and cankering malady, With irremediable decay consumed,

Sink to the untimely grave? Oh, think not thus!

Nor deem that such long anguish, and the grief 40

Which in the inmost soul doth strike its

There to abide through time, can overweigh

The blessings which have been, and yet shall be!

Think not that He in Whom we live, doth mock

Our dearest aspirations! Think not love,

Genius, and virtue should inhere alone In mere mortality, and Earth put out The sparks which are of Heaven! We are not left

In darkness, nor devoid of hope. The Light

Of Faith hath risen to us: the vanquish'd Grave 50

To us the great consolatory truth Proclaim'd that He who wounds will heal; and Death,

Opening the gates of Immortality, The spirits whom it hath dissevered here In everlasting union re-unite.

Keswick, 1814.

XXXIV (XXXIX) EPITAPH

Some there will be to whom, as here they read,

While yet these lines are from the chisel sharp,

The name of Clement Francis, will recall His countenance benign; and some who knew

What stores of knowledge and what humble thoughts.

What wiso desires, what cheerful piety, In happy union form'd the character Which faithfully impress'd his aspect

And others too there are, who in their hearts

Will bear the memory of his worth enshrined, 10

For tender and for reverential thoughts, When grief hath had its course, a lifelong theme.

A little while, and these, who to the truth

Of this poor tributary strain could bear Their witness, will themselves have pass'd away,

And this cold marble monument present Words which can then within no living mind Create the ideal form they once evoked; This, then, the sole memorial of the dead.

So be it. Only that which was of earth Hath perish'd; only that which was infirm.

Mortal, corruptible, and brought with it The seed connate of death. A place in

Is given us, only that we may prepare Our portion for Eternity: the Soul

Possesseth there what treasures for itself,

Wise to salvation, it laid up in Heaven.

O Man, take thou this lesson from the
Grave!

There too all true affections shall revive, To fade no more; all losses be restored,

All griefs be heal'd, all holy hopes fulfill'd.

INSCRIPTIONS FOR THE CALE-DONIAN CANAL

[Published in The Anniversary, 1829.]

XXXV (XL)

1. AT CLACHNACHARRY

ATHWART the island here, from sea to sea.

Between these mountain barriers, the Great Glen

Of Scotland offers to the traveller,

Through wilds impervious else, an easy path,

Along the shore of rivers and of lakes, In line continuous, whence the waters

flow Dividing east and west. Thus had they

held For untold centuries their perpetual

course Unprofited, till in the Georgian age

This mighty work was plann'd, which should unite

The lakes, control the innavigable atreams.

And through the bowels of the land deduce

A way, where vessels which must else have braved The formidable Cape, and have essayed | The salt sea water for the highland The perils of the Hyperborean Sea, Might from the Baltic to the Atlantic

deep

Pass and repass at will. So when the

Careers abroad, may they securely here, Through birchen groves, green fields, and pastoral hills.

Pursue their voyage home. Humanity May boast this proud expenditure, be-

By Britain in a time of arduous war: Through all the efforts and emergencies Of that long strife continued, and achieved

After her triumph, even at the time When national burdens bearing on the

Were felt with heaviest pressure. Such expense

Is best economy. In growing wealth, Comfort, and spreading industry, be-

The fruits immediate! And, in days to come.

Fitly shall this great British work be named

With whatsoe'er of most magnificence, For public use, Rome in her plenitude Of power effected, or all-glorious Greece, Or Egypt, mother-land of all the arts.

XXXVI (XLI)

2. At FORT AUGUSTUS

Thou who hast reach'd this level where the glede,

Wheeling between the mountains in mid air.

Eastward or westward as his gyre inclines.

Descries the German or the Atlantic Sea, Pause here; and, as thou seest the ship pursue

Her easy way serene, call thou to mind By what exertions of victorious art The way was open'd. Fourteen times

upheaved.

The vessel hath ascended, since she changed

lymph:

As oft in imperceptible descent

Must, step by step, be lower'd, before she woo

The ocean breeze again. Thou hast beheld

What basins, most capacious of their

Enclose her, while the obedient element Lifts or depones its burthen. Thou hast

The torrent hurrying from its native hills Pass underneath the broad canal inhumed.

Then issue harmless thence: the rivulet Admitted by its intake peaceably, Forthwith by gentle overfall discharged: And haply too thou hast observed the herds

Frequent their vaulted path, unconscious they

That the wide waters on the long low

Above them, lie sustained. What other

Science, audacious in emprize, hath wrought.

Meet not the eye, but well may fill the

Not from the bowels of the land alone, From lake and stream hath their diluvial

Been scoop'd to form this navigable way;

Huge rivers were controll'd, or from their course

Shoulder'd aside; and at the eastern mouth,

Where the salt ooze denied a resting place, There were the deep foundations laid, by weight

On weight immersed, and pile on pile down-driven,

Till steadfast as the everlasting rocks The massive outwork stands. Contemplate now

What days and nights of thought, what years of toil.

What inexhaustive springs of public wealth

The vast design required; the immediate good.

The future benefit progressive still;
And thou wilt pay thy tribute of due

To those whose counsels, whose decrees, whose care.

For after ages formed the generous work.

XXXVII (XLII)

3. AT BANAVIE

Where these capacious basins, by the laws

Of the subjacent element receive The ship, descending or upraised, eight

times,

From stage to stage with unfelt agency Translated; fitliest may the marble here Record the Architect's immortal name. Telford it was, by whose presiding mind

The whole great work was plann'd and perfected;

Telford, who o'er the vale of Cambrian

Aloft in air, at giddy height upborne, to Carried his navigable road, and hung High o'er Menai's straits the bending bridge;

Structures of more ambitious enterprize Than minstrels in the age of old romance To their own Merlin's magic lore ascribed.

Nor hath he for his native land perform'd

Less in this proud design; and where his piers

Around her coast from many a fisher's creek

Unshelter'd else, and many an ample port,

Repel the assailing storm; and where his roads 20

In beautiful and sinuous line far seen, Wind with the vale, and win the long ascent.

Now o'er the deep morass sustain'd, and now

Across ravine, or glen, or estuary, Opening a passage through the wilds subdued.

XXXVIII (XLIII)

EPITAPH IN BUTLEIGH CHURCH

DIVIDED far by death were they, whose names

In honour here united, as in birth,

This monumental verse records. They drew

In Dorset's healthy vales their natal breath,

And from these shores beheld the ocean first.

Whereon in early youth with one accord They chose their way of fortune; to that course

By Hood and Bridport's bright example drawn,

Their kinsmen, children of this place, and sons

Of one, who in his faithful ministry to Inculcated within these hallow'd walls The truths in mercy to mankindreveal'd. Worthy were these three brethren each to add

New honours to the already honour'd name:

But Arthur, in the morning of his day, Perish'd amid the Caribbean sea,

When the Pomona, by a hurricane

Whirl'd, riven and overwhelm'd, with all her crew

Into the deep went down. A longer date

To Alexander was assign'd, for hope, 20 For fair ambition, and for fond regret, Alas, how short! for duty, for desert,

Sufficing; and while Time preserves the roll

Of Britain's naval feats, for good report.

A boy, with Cook he rounded the great globe;

A youth, in many a celebrated fight With Rodney had his part; and having reach'd

Life's middle stage, engaging ship to ship.

When the French Hercules, a gallant foe.

Struck to the British Mars his threestriped flag. 30

He fell, in the moment of his victory.

Here his remains in sure and certain hope

Are laid, until the hour when Earth and Sea

Shall render up their dead. One brother yet
Survived, with Keppel and with Rodney

Survived, with Keppel and with Rodney train'd

In battles, with the Lord of Nile approved,

Ere in command he worthily upheld Old England's high prerogative. In the

The west, the Baltic and the Midland seas.

Yea, wheresoever hostile fleets have plough'd 40

The ensanguined deep, his thunders have been heard,

His flag in brave defiance hath been seen:

And bravest enemies at Sir Samuel's name

Felt fatal presage in their inmost heart, Of unavertible defeat foredoom'd.

Thus in the path of glory he rode on, Victorious alway, adding praise to praise:

Till full of honours, not of years, be-

The venom of the infected clime he sunk,

On Coromandel's coast, completing there 50

His service, only when his life was spent.

To the three brethren, Alexander's son

(Sole scion he in whom their line survived),

With English feeling, and the deeper sense

Of filial duty, consecrates this tomb.

1827.

XXXIX (XLIV) EPITAPH

To Butler's venerable memory
By private gratitude for public worth
This monument is raised, here where
twelve years

Meekly the blameless Prelate exercised His pastoral charge; and whither,

though removed

A little while to Durham's wider See, His mortal relics were convey'd to rest. Born in dissent, and in the school of schism

Bred, he withstood the withering influence

Of that unwholesome nurture. To the Church,

In strength of mind mature and judgment clear,

A convert, in sincerity of heart

Seeking the truth, deliberately convinced,

And finding there the truth he sought, he came.

In honour must his high desert be held

While there is any virtue, any praise;
For he it was whose gifted intellect
First apprehended, and developed first
The analogy connate, which in its course
And constitution Nature manifests
To the Creator's word and will divine;
And in the depth of that great argument
Laying his firm foundation, built there-

Proofs never to be shaken of the truths Reveal'd from Heaven in mercy to man-

kind; Allying thus Philosophy with Faith, And finding in things seen and known,

the type

And evidence of those within the veil.

CARMEN TRIUMPHALE

FOR THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE YEAR 1814

'Illi justitiam confirmavere triumphi, Praesentes docuere Deos.'—CLAUDIAN.

[Published together with Carmina Aulica in one volume in 1814. The first four stanzas were published in The Courier for January 8, 1814. See also Note to the 'Ode Written during the Negotiations with Buonaparte in January, 1814,' p. 755.

Written during the Negotiations with Buonaparte in January, 1814, p. 755.

Some extracts from Southey's notes to this Ode are printed at the end of the poem.

They are of interest as illustrating the attitude of British political parties during the

war with Napoleon, and the mistaken calculations of the Edinburgh Review.]

ı

In happy hour doth he receive The Laurel, meed of famous Bards of vore.

Which Dryden and diviner Spenser

wore, . .

In happy hour, and well may he rejoice,
Whose earliest task must be
To raise the exultant hymn for victory,
And join a nation's joy with harp and
voice, fwind,

Pouring the strain of triumph on the Glory to God, his song, Deliverance for Mankind!

п

Wake, lute and harp! My soul take up the strain! 10 Glory to God! Deliverance for Man-

kind!
Joy, . . for all Nations, joy! But
most for thee,

most for thee,
Who hast so nobly fill'd thy part
assign'd, [lan

O England! O my glorious native For thou in evil days didse stand Against leagued Europe all in arms

array'd,
Single and undismay'd,
Thy hope in Heaven and in thine own
right hand.

Glory to God! Deliverance for Mankind!

ш

Dread was the strife, for mighty was the foe

Who sought with his whole strength thy overthrow.

The Nations bow'd before him; some in war

Subdued, some yielding to superior art; Submiss, they follow'd his victorious car. Their Kings, like Satraps, waited

round his throne;
For Britain's ruin and their own,

By force or fraud in monstrous league combined.

Alone, in that disastrous hour, Britain stood firm and braved his power:

Alone she fought the battles of mankind.

IV

O virtue which, above all former fame, Exalts her venerable name! O joy of joys for every British breast! That with that mighty peril full in

view, [true! The Queen of Ocean to herself was That no weak heart, no abject mind

possess'd Her counsels, to abase her lofty crest, . . (Then had she sunk in everlasting

shame),
But ready still to succour the oppress'd,

Her Red Cross floated on the waves unfurl'd, [world Offering Redemption to the groaning V.

First from his trance the heroic Spaniard woke; His chains he broke,

And casting off his neck the treacherous voke.

He call'd on England, on his generous foe:

For well he knew that wheresoe'er Wise policy prevail'd, or brave despair, Thither would Britain's liberal

succours flow,
Her arm be present there.
Then, too, regenerate Portugal
display'd

Her ancient virtue, dormant all-toolong.

Rising against intolerable wrong. On England, on her old ally, for aid The faithful nation call'd in her distress:

And well that old ally the call obey'd,
Well was that faithful friendship then repaid.

VI

Say from thy trophied field how well, Vimeiro! Rocky Douro tell! 60 And thou, Busaco, on whose sacred height

The astonished Carmelite,
While those unwonted thunders shook
his cell,
Join'd with his prayers the fervour of

the fight.
Bear witness those old Towers, where

many a day
Waiting with foresight calm the fitting

hour,
The Wellesley, gathering strength in
wise delay,

Defied the Tyrant's undivided power.

Swore not the boastful Frenchman in his might,

Into the sea to drive his Island-foe?
Tagus and Zezere, in secret night,
Ye saw that host of ruffians take their
flight!

And in the Sun's broad light Onoro's Springs beheld their overthrow. VII

Patient of loss, profuse of life, Meantime had Spain endured the strife; And though she saw her cities yield.

Her armies scatter'd in the field, Her strongest bulwarks fall; 79 The danger undismay'd she view'd, Knowing that nought could e'er appal

The Spaniards' fortitude. What though the Tyrant, drunk with power,

Might vaunt himself, in impious hour, Lord and Disposer of this earthly ball? Her cause is just, and Heaven is over all.

VIII

Therefore no thought of fear debased Her judgment, nor her acts disgraced. To every ill, but not to shame resign'd, All sufferings, all calamities she bore.

She bade the people call to mind of Their heroes of the days of yore, Pelayo and the Campeador, With all who, once in battle strong,

Lived still in story and in song.

Against the Moor, age after age,
Their stubborn warfare did they wage;

Age after age, from sire to son,
The hallowed sword was handed down;
Nor did they from that warfare cease,
And sheathe that hallow'd sword in

peace, Until the work was done.

ıx

Thus, in the famous days of yore, Their fathers triumph'd o'er the Moor.

They gloried in his overthrow, But touch'd not with reproach his gallant name;

For fairly, and with hostile aim profest, The Moor had rear'd his haughty crest,

An open, honourable foe; But as a friend the treacherous French-

man came,

And Spain received him as a guest.

Think what your fathers were!

she cried.

Think what ye are, in sufferings tried; And think of what your sons must be . .

Even as ye make them . . slaves or free!

x

Strains such as these from Spain's three seas,

And from the farthest Pyrenees, Rung through the region. Vengeance was the word;

One impulse to all hearts at once was given;

From every voice the sacred cry was heard, 12

And borne abroad by all the winds of Heaven.

Heaven too, to whom the Spaniards look'd for aid,

A spirit equal to the hour bestow'd;
And gloriously the debt they paid,
Which to their valiant ancestors they
owed; [France

And gloriously against the power of Maintain'd their children's proud inheritance.

Their steady purpose no defeat could move, [mind;

No horrors could abate their constant Hope had its source and resting-place above, 130

And they, to loss of all on earth resign'd,

Suffer'd, to save their country, and mankind.

What strain heroic might suffice to tell, How Zaragoza stood, and how she fell? No'er since yon sun began his daily round.

Was higher virtue, holier valour, found Than on that consecrated ground.

ΧI

Alone the noble Nation stood, When from Coruña, in the main, The star of England set in blood. 140 Ere long on Talavera's plain, That star resplendent rose again; And though that day was doom'd to be

A day of frustrate victory,
Not vainly bled the brave;
For French and Spaniard there might
see [save;

That England's arm was strong to Fair promise there the Welleslev gave, And well in sight of earth and Heaven Did he redeem the pledge which there was given.

XII

Lord of Conquest, heir of Fame, From rescued Portugal he came. Rodrigo's walls in vain oppose; In vain thy bulwarks, Badajoz; And Salamanca's heights proclaim The Conqueror's praise, the Wellesley's name.

Oh, had the sun stood still that

hour, When Marmont and his broken power

Fled from their field of shame!
Spain felt through all her realms the
electric blow;
160

Cadiz in peace expands her gates again;

And Betis, who, to bondage long resign'd.

Flow'd mournfully along the silent plain,

Into her joyful bosom unconfined Receives once more the treasures of the main.

XIII

What now shall check the Wellesley, when at length

Onward he goes, rejoicing in his strength?

From Douro, from Castille's extended plain,

The foe, a numerous band, Retire; amid the heights which overhang 170

Dark Ebro's bed, they think to make their stand.

He reads their purpose, and prevents their speed;

And still as they recede, Impetuously he presses on their way;

Till by Vittoria's walls they stood at

And drew their battle up in fair array.

XIV

Vain their array, their valour vain There did the practised Frenchman find

en A master arm, a master mind!
Behold his veteran army driven 180
150 Like dust before the breath of Heaven,

Like leaves before the autumnal wind!

Now, Britain, now thy brow with laurels bind;

Raise now the song of joy for rescued Spain!

And Europe, take thou up the awakening strain . . lory to God! Deliverance for Man

Glory to God! Deliverance for Mankind!

χv

From Spain the living spark went forth:

The flame hath caught, the flame is spread!

It warms, . . it fires the farthest North. Behold! the awaken'd Muscovite 190 Meets the Tyrant in his might; 6

The Brandenburg, at Freedom's call, Rises more glorious from his fall; And Frederick, best and greatest of

the name, Treads in the path of duty and of

fame. See Austria from her painful trance

awake!
The breath of God goes forth, . . the
dry bones shake!

Up Germany! . . with all thy nations rise!

Land of the virtuous and the wise, No longer let that free, that mighty mind,

Endure its shame! She rose as from the dead,

She broke her chains upon the oppressor's head . . *

Glory to God! Deliverance for Mankind!

TUI

Open thy gates, O Hanover! display
Thy loyal banners to the day;
Receive thy old illustrious line once
more!

Beneath an Upstart's yoke opprest, Long hath it been thy fortune to deplore

That line, whose fostering and paternal sway

So many an age thy grateful children

So many an age thy grateful children blest.

The yoke is broken now: . . A mightier hand

Hath dash'd, . . in pieces dash'd, . . the iron rod.

To meet her Princes, the deliver'd

Pours her rejoicing multitudes abroad;
The happy bells, from every town
and tower,

Roll their glad peals upon the joyful wind:

And from all hearts and tongues, with one consent,

The high thanksgiving strain to heaven is sent, . .

Glory to God! Deliverance for Mankind!

XVII

Egmont and Horn, heard ye that holy cry, 220

Martyrs of Freedom, from your seats in Heaven?

And William the Deliverer, doth thine eye

Regard from you empyreal realm the

For which thy blood was given? What ills hath that poor Country suffer'd long!

Deceived, despised, and plunder'd, and oppress'd,

Mockery and insult aggravating wrong!

Severely she her errors hath atoned, And long in anguish groan'd,

Wearing the patient semblance of despair, 23

While fervent curses rose with every prayer:

In mercy Heaven at length its ear inclined;

The avenging armies of the North draw nigh,

Joy for the injured Hollander!.. the

Of Orange rends the sky! All hearts are now in one good cause

combined, . .

Once more that flag triumphant floats

on high, . .
Glory to God! Deliverance for
Mankind!

XVIII

When shall the Dove go forth? Oh when

Shall Peace return among the Sons of Men?

Hasten benignant Heaven the blessed

day! Justice must go before, And Retribution must make plain the way;

Force must be crushed by Force, The power of Evil by the power of Good,

Ere Order bless the suffering world once more.

Or Peace return again. Hold then right on in your auspicious

course.

Ye Princes, and ye People, hold right 250

Your task not vet is done:

Pursue the blow, . . ye know your foe. . .

Complete the happy work so well begun.

Hold on, and be your aim with all your strength

Loudly proclaim'd and steadily pursued:

So shall this fatal Tyranny at length Before the arms of Freedom fall subdued.

Then, when the waters of the flood abate.

The Dove her resting-place secure may find:

And France restored, and shaking off her chain.

Shall join the Avengers in the joyful strain,

Glory to God! Deliverance for Mankind!

NOTES TO CARMEN TRIUMPHALE

¹ Torres Vedras. Turres Veteres, . . a l name so old as to have been given when the Latin tongue was the language of Portugal. This town is said to have been founded by the Turduli, a short time before the commencement of the Christian Æra.

In remembering the lines of Torres Vedras, the opinion of the wise men of the North ought not to be forgotten, 'If they (the French) do not make an effort to drive us out of Portugal, it is because we are better there than any where else. We fear they will not leave us on the Tagus many days longer than suits their own purposes.'-Edinburgh Review, No. XXVII, p. 263.

The opinion is delivered with happy precision of language: . . Our troops were indeed, to use the same neat and felicitous expression, 'better there than any where else.1

No cruelties recorded in history exceed those which were systematically committed by the French during their retreat from Portugal. 'Their conduct,' (says Lord Wellington in his dispatch of the 14th of March, 1811,) 'throughout this retreat, has been marked by a barbarity seldom equalled, and never surpassed.

'Even in the towns of Torres Novas,

quarters of some of the corps had been for four months, and in which the inhabitants had been induced by promises of good treatment to remain, they were plundered, and many of their houses destroyed on the night the enemy withdrew from their position; and they have since burnt every town and village through which they have passed. The Convent of Alcobaça was burnt by order from the French head-quarters. The Bishop's Palace, and the whole town of Leyria, in which General Drouet had had his head-quarters, shared the same fate; and there is not an inhabitant of the country, of any class or description, who has had any dealing or communication with the French army who has not had reason to repent of it, or to complain of them. This is the mode in which the promises have been performed, and the assurances have been fulfilled, which were held out in the proclamation of the French commander-in-chief, in which he told the inhabitants of Portugal, that he was not come to make war upon them, but with a powerful army of one hundred and ten thousand men to drive the English into the sea. It is to be hoped, that the example of what has occurred in this country will teach the people of this and Thomar, and Pernes, in which the head other nations what value they ought to place

on such promises and assurances, and that there is no security for life or for any thing that renders life valuable, except in decided

resistance to the enemy.

As exact an account of these atrocities was collected as it was possible to obtain, ... and that record will for ever make the French name detested in Portugal. In the single diocese of Coimbra, 2,969 persons, men, women, and children, were murdered, . . every one with some shocking circumstance of aggravated cruelty. . . . huma só das 2969 mortes commettidas pelo inimigo deixou de ser atroz e dolorosissima.' (Breve Memoria dos Estragos Causados no Bispado de Coimbra pelo Éxercito Francez, commandado pelo General Massena. Extrahida das Enformaçõens que deram os Reverendos Parocos, e remettida a Junta dos Socorros da Subscripsam Britannica, pelo Reverendo Provisor Governador do mesmo Bispado, p. 12.) Some details are given in this brief Memorial. 'A de tel forfaits,' says J. J. Rousseau, 'celui qui détourne ses regards est un lache, un déserteur de la justice: la véritable humanité les envisage pour les connoître, pour les juger, pour les détester.' (Le Levite d'Ephraim.) I will not, however, in this place repeat abominations which at once outrage humanity and disgrace human nature.

When the French, in 1792, entered Spire, some of them began to commit excesses which would soon have led to a general sack. Custine immediately ordered a captain, two officers, and a whole company to be shot. This dreadful example, he told the National Convention, he considered as the only means of saving the honour of the French nation, . . and it met with the approbation of the whole army. But the French armies had not then been systematically brutalized. It was reserved for Buonaparte to render them infamous, as well as to lead them to destruction.

The French soldier, says Capmany, is executioner and robber at the same time: he leaves the unhappy wretch who is delivered over to his mercy, naked to the skin, . . stripping off the clothes that they may not be torn by the musket-shot! . The pen falls from my hand, and I cannot

proceed!

'Para que se junte á esta crueldad la mayor infamia, el soldado Frances es verdugo y ladron en una pieza; dexa en cueros vivos al malaventurado que entregan á su discrecion, quitandole la ropa antes que los salvation of Europe, . . how wretched the

fusilazos se la destrozen. La pluma se cae de la mano, y no puede proseguir.'—Centinela, contra Franceses, P. ii, p. 35.

Yet the Edinburgh Review says, 'the hatred of the name of a Frenchman in Spain has been such as the reality will by no means justify; and the detestation of the French government has, among the inferior orders, been carried to a pitch wholly unauthorized by its proceedings towards them.'—No. XXVII, p. 262. This passage might be read with astonishment, if any thing absurd, any thing mischievous, or any thing false, could excite surprise when it comes from that quarter.

§ Fuentes d'Onoro. This name has sometimes been rendered Fountains of Honour. by an easy mistake, or a pardonable licence.

4 'The fate of Spain, we think, is decided, and that fine and misguided country has probably yielded, by this time, to the fate which has fallen on the greater part of continental Europe. Her European dominions have yielded already to the unrelaxing grasp of the insatiable conqueror.'—Edin-burgh Review, No. XXVI, p. 298.

'The fundamental position which we ventured to lay down respecting the Spanish question was this: . . that the spirit of the people, however enthusiastic and universal. was in its nature more uncertain and shortlived, more likely to be extinguished by reverses, or to go out of itself amidst the delays of a protracted contest, than the steady, regular, moderate feeling which calls out disciplined troops, and marshals them under known leaders, and supplies them by systematic arrangements: . proposition so plain and obvious, that if it escaped ridicule as a truism, it might have been reasonably expected to avoid the penalties of heresy and paradox. The event has indeed woefully proved its truth.'—Edin-burgh Review, No. XXVII, p. 246. These gentlemen could see no principle

of permanence in the character of the Spaniards, and no proof of it in their history: . and they could discover no principle of dissolution in the system of Buonaparte; . a system founded upon force and falsehood, in direct opposition to the interest of his own subjects and to the feelings of human

nature.

⁵ The Cid, Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar.

6 'Ecce iterum Crispinus!' What says the Edinburgh Review concerning Russia? 'Considering how little that power has shown itself capable of effecting for the state of its subjects is under the present government, .. how trifling an acquisition of strength the common enemy could expect to obtain from the entire possession of its resources, we acknowledge that we should contemplate with great composure any change which might lay the foundation of future improvement, and scatter the forces of France over the dominion of the Czars.'-

No. XXVIII, p. 460.

This is a choice passage. The reasoning is worthy of the writer's judgement, the feeling perfectly consistent with his liberality, and the conclusion as consistent with his

politics.

Hear the Edinburgh Reviewer! 'It would be as chimerical to expect a mutiny among the vassal states of France who are the most impatient of her yoke, as amongst the inhabitants of Bourdeaux, or the conscripts of the year 1808 and 1809. In making this comparison, we are indeed putting the case much more strongly against

France than the facts warrant, for with the exception of Holland, and the States into which the conscription has been introduced. either immediately, or by means of large requisitions of men made to their Governments,* the changes effected by the French invasion have been favourable to the individual happiness of the inhabitants t, so that the hatred of France is liable to considerable diminution, inasmuch as the national antipathy and spirit of independence are gradually undermined by the solid benefits which the change of masters has conferred.'—No. XXVIII, p. 458.

Great as a statesman, profound as a philosopher, amiable as an optimist of the Pangloss school, . . but not altogether for-

tunate as a Prophet!

* N.B. These little exceptions include all the countries which were annexed to the French Empire, all Italy, and all the States of the Confederation of the Rhine.

† Particularly the commercial part of them.

EPISTLE TO ALLAN CUNNINGHAM

[First published in The Anniversary, 1829.]

Well. Heaven be thank'd! friend Weary of hurried days and restless Allan, here I am,

Once more to that dear dwelling place Watchmen, whose office is to murder return'd.

Where I have pass'd the whole mid stage of life.

Not idly, certes; not unworthily, ... So let me hope: where Time upon my

Hath laid his frore and monitory hand: And when this poor frail earthly tabernacle

Shall be dissolved, . . it matters not how

Or late, in God's good time, . . where I would fain

Be gathered to my children, earth to earth.

Needless it were to say how willingly I bade the huge metropolis farewell, Its din, and dust, and dirt, and smoke,

and smut.

Thames' water, paviour's ground, and And those whose sober habits are not London sky;

nights.

sleep

When sleep might else have weigh'd one's evelids down.

Rattle of carriages, and roll of carts,

And tramp of iron hoofs; and worse than all, . .

Confusion being worse confounded then, With coachmen's quarrels and with footmen's shouts.

My next-door neighbours, in a street not

Macadamized, (me miserable!) at home; For then had we from midnight until morn

street-thunders. House-quakes, door-batteries.

O Government! in thy wisdom and thy

Tax knockers; ... in compassion to the sick.

vet

Inverted, topsy-turvying night and day, Tax them more heavily than thou hast charged 30

Armorial bearings and bepowder'd pates. And thou, O Michael, ever to be praised, Angelic among Taylors! for thy laws Antifuliginous, extend those laws

Till every chimney its own smoke consume.

And give thenceforth thy dinners unlampoon'd.

Escaping from all this, the very whirl Of mail-coach wheels bound outward from Lad-lane.

Was peace and quietness. Three hundred miles

Of homeward way seem'd to the body rest,

And to the mind repose.

Donne did not hate More perfectly that city. Not for all Its social, all its intellectual joys, . . Which having touch'd, I may not con-

descend
To name aught else the Demon of the

Might for his lure hold forth; . . not even for these

Would I forego gardens and green-field walks,

And hedge-row trees, and stiles, and shady lanes,

And orchards, were such ordinary scenes
Alone to me accessible as those 50
Wherein I learnt in infancy to love
The sights and sounds of Nature; . . .

wholesome sights
Gladdening the eye that they refresh;
and sounds

Which, when from life and happiness they spring.

Bear with them to the yet unharden'd heart

A sense that thrills its cords of sympathy;

¹ This poet begins his second Satire thus:—

'Sir, though (I thank God for it) I do hate Perfectly all this town, yet there 's one state In all ill things so excellently best, That hate towards them breeds pity towards

the rest.'

Or, when proceeding from insensate things.

Oh not for all that London might bestow Would I renounce the genial influences And thoughts and feelings to be found where er

We breathe beneath the open sky, and

Earth's liberal bosom. Judge then by thyself,

Allan, true child of Scotland, . . thou who art

So oft in spirit on thy native hills,

And yonder Solway shores, . . a poet thou,

Judge by thyself how strong the ties which bind

A poet to his home; when, . . making thus

Fortune hath set his happy habitacle Among the ancient hills, near mountain

streams
And lakes pellucid, in a land sublime
And lovely as those regions of Romance
Where his young fancy in its day-dreams
roam'd.

Expatiating in forests wild and wide, Loëgrian, or of dearest Faery-land.

Yet, Allan, of the cup of social joy No man drinks freelier, nor with heartier thirst,

Nor keener relish, where I see around Faces which I have known and loved so long.

That when he prints a dream upon my brain

Dan Morpheus takes them for his readiest types.

And therefore in that loathed metropolis

Time measured out to me some golden hours.

They were not leaden-footed while the

Beneath the patient touch of Chantrey's hand

Grew to the semblance of my lineaments. Lit up in memory's landscape, like green spots 90

Of sunshine, are the mornings, when in

With him and thee, and Bedford (my true friend

Of forty years), I saw the work proceed, Subject the while myself to no restraint, But pleasureably in frank discourse engaged:

Pleased too, and with no unbecoming

pride

To think this countenance, such as it is, So oft by rascally mislikeness wrong d, Should faithfully to those who in his works

Have seen the inner man pourtray'd, be shown.

And in enduring marble should partake Of our great sculptor's immortality.

I have been libell'd, Allan, as thou knowest,

Through all degrees of calumny; but they

Who fix one's name for public sale beneath

A set of features slanderously unlike, Are the worst libellers. Against the wrong

Which they inflict Time hath no remedy. Injuries there are which Time redresseth best.

Being more sure in judgement, though

Slower in process even than the court Where justice, tortoise-footed and mole-

Sleeps undisturb'd, fann'd by the lulling wings

Of harpies at their prey. We soon live down

Evil or good report, if undeserved.

Let then the dogs of Faction bark and bay,

Its bloodhounds, savaged by a cross of wolf,

Its full-bred kennel from the Blatantbeast;

And from my lady's gay veranda, let Her pamper'd lap-dog with his fetid breath

In bold bravado join, and snap and growl,

With petulant consequentialness elate, There in his imbecility at once

Ridiculous and safe; though all give cry, Whiggery's sleek spaniels, and its

lurchers lean, Its poodles by unlucky training marr'd, Mongrel and cur and bob-tail, let them

yelp Till weariness and hoarseness shall at

length
Silence the noisy pack; meantime be

I will not stoop for stones to cast among them.

The foumarts and the skunks may be secure

In their own scent; and for that viler swarm,

The vermin of the press, both those that

And those that creep and crawl, I do not catch

And pin them for exposure on the page, Their filth is their defence.

But I appeal Against the limner's and the graver's wrong:

Their evil works survive them. Bilderdijk.

Whom I am privileged to call my friend, Suffering by graphic libels in likewise, Gave his wrath vent in verse. Would I could give

The life and spirit of his vigorous Dutch, As his dear consort hath transfused my strains

Into her native speech; and made them known

On Rhine and Yssel, and rich Amstel's banks:

And wheresoe'er the voice of Vondel still Is heard, and still Antonides and Hooft Are living agencies; and Father Cats,

The household poet, teacheth in his songs

The love of all things lovely, all things
pure:
150
Rest poet who delights the cheerful

Best poet, who delights the cheerful mind

Of childhood, stores with moral strength the heart Of youth, with wisdom maketh mid-life rich,

And fills with quiet tears the eyes of age.

Hear then in English rhyme how Bilderdijk

Describes his wicked portraits, one by one.

'A madman who from Bedlam hath broke loose:

An honest fellow of the numskull race; And pappyer-headed still, a very goose Staring with eyes agast and vacant face;

A Frenchman who would mirthfully display

On some poor idiot his malicious wit; And lastly, one who, train'd up in the way

Of worldly craft, hath not forsaken it, But hath served Mammon with his whole intent.

A thing of Nature's worst materials made,

Low-minded, stupid, base and insolent. I, . . I, . . a Poet, . . have been thus pourtray'd.

Can ye believe that my true effigy

Among these vile varieties is found?
What thought, or line, or word, hath
fallen from me 171
In all my numerous works where

In all my numerous works whereon to ground

The opprobrious notion? Safely I may smile

At these, acknowledging no likeness here.

But worse is yet to come; so, soft awhile!

For now in potter's earth must I appear,

And in such workmanship, that, sooth to say,

Humanity disowns the imitation.

And the dolt image is not worth its clay.

Then comes there one who will to
admiration 180

In plastic wax my perfect face present;
And what of his performance comes
at last?

Folly itself in every lineament!
Its consequential features overcast

With the coxcombical and shallow laugh Of one who would, for condescension, hide,

Yet in his best behaviour, can but half Suppress the scorafulness of empty pride.'

'And who is Bilderdijk?' methinks thou sayest,

A ready question; yet which, trust me, Allan,

Would not be ask'd, had not the curse that came

From Babel, clipt the wings of Poetry.

Napoleon ask'd him once with cold fix'd look.

'Art thou then in the world of letters known?'

'I have deserved to be,' the Hollander Replied, meeting that proud imperial look

With calm and proper confidence, and eve

As little wont to turn away abash'd Before a mortal presence. He is one Who hath received upon his constant breast

The sharpest arrows of adversity;
Whom not the clamours of the multitude
Demanding in their madness and their
might

Iniquitous things, could shake in his firm mind;

Nor the strong hand of instant tyranny, From the straight path of duty turn aside.

But who in public troubles, in the wreck Of his own fortunes, in proscription, exile.

Want, obloquy, ingratitude, neglect, And what severer trials Providence 210

And what severer trials Providence 210 Sometimes inflicteth, chastening whom it loves,

In all, through all, and over all, hath borne

An equal heart, as resolute toward
The world, as humbly and religiously
Beneath his heavenly Father's rod
resign'd.

Right-minded, happy-minded, righteous

True lover of his country and his kind; In knowledge, and in inexhaustive stores Inferior in illustrious deeds to none, But circumscribed by narrow bounds, and now

Sinking in irrecoverable decline,

Hath pent within its sphere a name wherewith

Europe should else have rung from side to side.

Such, Allan, is the Hollander to whom

Esteem and admiration have attach'd My soul, not less than pre-consent of mind,

And gratitude for benefits, when being A stranger, sick, and in a foreign land,

He took me like a brother to his house,

And ministered to me, and made a time Which had been wearisome and careful

So pleasurable, that in my kalendar There are no whiter days. 'Twill be a joy

For us to meet in Heaven, though we should look

Upon each other's earthly face no more.

This is this world's complexion!

cheerful thoughts

Bring sad thoughts to the mind,' and these again

Give place to calm content, and steadfast hope, 240

And happy faith assured. . . Return we now.

With such transition as our daily life Imposes in its wholesome discipline. To a lighter strain; and from the gallery Of the Dutch Poet's mis-resemblances Pass into mine; where I shall show thee, Allan,

Such an array of villainous visages, That if among them all there were but one

Which as a likeness could be proved upon me,

It were enough to make me in mere shame 250 Take up an alias, and forswear myself. Whom have we first? A dainty gentleman,

His sleepy eyes half-closed, and countenance

To no expression stronger than might suit

A simper, capable of being moved: Sawney and sentimental; with an air So lack-thought and so lackadaisycal, You might suppose the volume in his

hand

Must needs be Zimmermann on Solitude.

Then comes a jovial landlord, who hath made it 260
Part of his trade to be the shoeing horn
For his commercial customers. God
Bacchus

Hath not a thirstier votary. Many a pipe Of Porto's vintage hath contributed To give his cheeks that deep carmine engrain'd,

And many a runlet of right Nantes, I ween,

Hath suffer'd percolation through that trunk,

Leaving behind it in the boozey eyes

A swoln and red suffusion, glazed and
dim.

Our next is in the evangelical line, 270 A leaden-visaged specimen; demure, Because he hath put on his Sunday's face:

Dull by formation, by complexion sad, By bile, opinions, and dyspepsy sour. One of the sons of Jack, . . I know not which,

For Jack hath a most numerous progeny, . .

Made up for Mr. Colburn's Magazine
This pleasant composite; a bust supplied

The features; look, expression, character,

Are of the artist's fancy and free grace. Such was that fellow's birth and parentage.

The rascal proved prolific; one of his breed,

By Docteur Pichot introduced in France, Passes for Monsieur Sooté; and another, . . An uglier miscreant too, . . the brothers Schumann

And their most cruel copper-scratcher Zschoch,

From Zwickau sent abroad through Germany.

I wish the Schumen and the copperscratcher

No worse misfortune for their recompence,

Than to encounter such a cut-throat face 290

In the Black Forest or the Odenwald.

And now is there a third derivative
From Mr. Colburn's composite, which
late

The Arch-Pirate Galignani hath prefix'd,

A spurious portrait to a faithless life, And bearing lyingly the libell'd name Of Lawrence, impudently there insculpt.

The bust that was the innocent forefather

To all this base, abominable brood, I blame not, Allan. 'Twas the work of Smith.

A modest, mild, ingenious man, and errs, Where erring, only because over-true, Too close a likeness for similitude; Fixing to every part and lineament Its separate character, and missing thus That which results from all.

Sir Smug comes next;
Allan, I own Sir Smug! I recognize
That visage with its dull sobriety;
I see it duly as the day returns,

When at the looking-glass with lather'd chin 310

And razor-weapon'd hand I sit, the face Composed and apprehensively intent Upon the necessary operation

About to be perform'd, with touch, alas, Not always confident of hair-breadth skill.

Even in such sober sadness and constrain'd

Composure cold, the faithful Painter's eve

Had fix'd me like a spell, and I could feel My features stiffen as he glanced upon them. And yet he was a man whom I loved dearly, 320

My fellow-traveller, my familiar friend, My household guest. But when he look'd upon me.

Anxious to exercise his excellent art,

The countenance he knew so thoroughly Was gone, and in its stead there sate Sir Smug.

Under the graver's hand, Sir Smug became

Sir Smouch, . . a son of Abraham. Now albeit,

For rather would I trace my lineage thence

Than with the oldest line of Peers or Kings

Claim consanguinity, that cast of features 330

Would ill accord with me, who in all forms

Of pork, baked, roasted, toasted, boil'd or broil'd,

Fresh, salted, pickled, seasoned, moist or dry,

Whether ham, bacon, sausage, souse or brawn,

Leg, bladebone, baldrib, griskin, chine, or chop,

Profess myself a genuine Philopig.

It was, however, as a Jew whose portion

Had fallen unto him in a goodly land Of loans, of omnium, and of three per cents.

That Messrs. Percy of the Anecdotefirm 340 Presented me unto their customers.

Poor Smouch endured a worse judaization

Under another hand. In this next stage He is on trial at the Old Bailey, charged With dealing in base coin. That he is guilty

No Judge or Jury could have half a doubt

When they saw the culprit's face; and he himself,

As you may plainly see, is comforted By thinking he has just contrived to keep Out of rope's reach, and will come off this time

For transportation.

Stand thou forth for trial, Now, William Darton, of the Society Of Friends called Quakers; thou who in 4th month

Of the year 24, on Holborn Hill,

At No. 58., didst wilfully,

Falsely, and knowing it was falsely done, Publish upon a card, as Robert Southev's, A face which might be just as like Tom Fool's,

Or John, or Richard Any-body-else's! What had I done to thee, thou William Darton.

That thou shouldst for the lucre of base gain.

Yea, for the sake of filthy fourpences, Palm on my countrymen that face for mine?

O William Darton, let the Yearly Meeting

Deal with thee for that falseness! All the rest

Are traceable: Smug's Hebrew family: The German who might properly adorn A gibbet or a wheel, and Monsieur Sooté. Sons of Fitzbust the Evangelical; . . I recognize all these unlikenesses, Spurious abominations though they be, Each filiated on some original;

But thou, Friend Darton, and . . observe

me, man, Only in courtesy, and quasi Quaker, I call thee Friend!.. hadst no original; No likeness or unlikeness, silhouette. Outline, or plaster, representing me, Whereon to form thy misrepresentation. If I guess rightly at the pedigree

Of thy bad groatsworth, thou didst get a barber To personate my injured Laureateship; An advertising barber, . . one who keeps A bear, and when he puts to death poor

Sells his grease, fresh as from the carcass cut.

Pro bono publico, the price per pound Twelve shillings and no more. From such a barber.

O unfriend Darton! was that portrait made

I think, or peradventure from his block.

Next comes a minion worthy to be set In a wooden frame; and here I might invoke

Avenging Nemesis, if I did not feel Just now God Cynthius pluck me by the ear.

But, Allan, in what shape God Cynthius

And wherefore he admonisheth me thus, Nor thou nor I will tell the world; here-

The commentators, my Malones and Reids.

May if they can. For in my gallery Though there remaineth undescribed

good store, Yet 'of enough enough, and now no more,

(As honest old George Gascoigne said of yore,) Save only a last couplet to express That I am always truly yours,

R.S.

Keswick, August, 1828.

MADOC.

OMNE SOLUM FORTI PATRIA.

то

CHARLES WATKIN WILLIAMS WYNN, THIS POEM

WAS ORIGINALLY INSCRIBED, IN 1805,
AS A TOKEN OF SIXTEEN YEARS OF UNINTERRUPTED FRIENDSHIP;
AND IS NOW RE-INSCRIBED WITH THE SAME FEELING,
AFTER AN INTERVAL OF THIRTY-TWO.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THE historical facts on which this Poem is founded may be related in a few words. On the death of Owen Gwyneth, king of North Wales, A.D. 1169, his children disputed the succession. werth, the elder, was set aside without a struggle, as being incapacitated by a blemish in his face. Hoel, though illegitimate, and born of an Irish mother, obtained possession of the throne for a while, till he was defeated and slain by David, the eldest son of the late king by a second wife. The conqueror, who then succeeded without opposition, slew Yorwerth, imprisoned Rodri, and hunted others of his brethren into exile. But Madoc, meantime, abandoned his barbarous country, and sailed away to the West in search of The land some better resting-place. which he discovered pleased him: he left there part of his people, and went back to Wales for a fresh supply of adventurers, with whom he again set sail, and was heard of no more. Strong evidence has been adduced that he reached America, and that his posterity exist there to this day, on the southern branches of the Missouri, retaining their complexion, their language, and, in some degree, their arts.

About the same time, the Aztecas, an American tribe, in consequence of certain calamities, and of a particular Aztlan. omen. forsook their country, under the guidance of Yuhid-They became a mighty people, and founded the Mexican empire, taking the name of Mexicans, in honour of Mexitli, their tutelary god. Their emigration is here connected with the adventures of Madoc, and their superstition is represented as the same which their descendants practised, when discovered by the Spaniards. The manners of the Poem, in both its parts, will be found historically true. It assumes not the degraded title of Epic: and the question, therefore, is not whether the story is formed upon the rules of Aristotle, but whether it be adapted to the purposes of poetry.

Keswick, 1805.

'Three things must be avoided in Poetry; the frivolous, the obscure, and the superfluous.

'The three excellencies of Poetry; simplicity of language, simplicity of subject, and simplicity of invention.

'The three indispensable purities of Poetry; pure truth, pure language, and pure manners.

'Three things should all Poetry be; thoroughly erudite, thoroughly animated, and thoroughly natural.'—Triads.

COME, LISTEN TO A TALE OF TIMES OF OLD!
COME, FOR YE KNOW ME. I AM HE WHO SANG
THE MAID OF ARC, AND I AM HE WHO FRAMED
OF THALABA THE WILD AND WONDROUS SONG.
COME, LISTEN TO MY LAY, AND YE SHALL
HEAR

HOW MADOC FROM THE SHORES OF BRITAIN SPREAD

THE ADVENTUROUS SAIL, EXPLORED THE OCEAN PATHS,

AND QUELLED BARBARIAN POWER, AND OVERTHREW

THE BLOODY ALTARS OF IDOLATRY,

AND PLANTED IN ITS FANES TRIUMPHANTLY
THE CROSS OF CHRIST. COME, LISTEN TO
MY LAY!

MADOC IN WALES: PART I

I. THE RETURN TO WALES

FAIR blows the wind, . . the vessel drives along.

Her streamers fluttering at their length, her sails

All full, . . she drives along, and round her prow

Scatters the ocean spray. What feelings

Fill'd every bosom, when the mariners, After the peril of that weary way,

Beheld their own dear country! Here stands one

Stretching his sight toward the distant shore.

And as to well-known forms his busy joy

joy Shapes the dim outline, eagerly he

points 10
The fancied headland and the cape and

Till his eyes ache o'erstraining. This man shakes

His comrade's hand and bids him welcome home,

And blesses God, and then he weeps aloud:

Here stands another, who in secret prayer

Calls on the Virgin and his patron Saint, Renewing his old vows of gifts and alms

And pilgrimage, so he may find all well. Silent and thoughtful and apart from all Stood Madoe; now his noble enterprise Proudly remembering, now in dreams of hope,

Anon of bodings full and doubt and fear.

Fair smiled the evening, and the favouring gale

Sung in the shrouds, and swift the steady bark

Rush'd roaring through the waves.

The sun goes down:

Far off his light is on the naked crags Of Penmanmawr, and Arvon's ancient hills:

And the last glory lingers yet awhile, Crowning old Snowdon's venerable head, That rose amid his mountains. Now the ship

Drew nigh where Mona, the dark island, stretch'd

Her shore along the ocean's lighter line. There through the mist and twilight, many a fire

Up-flaming stream'd upon the level sea Red lines of lengthening light, which, far away

Rising and falling, flash'd athwart the waves.

Thereat full many a thought of ill disturb'd

Prince Madoc's mind; . . did some new conqueror seize

The throne of David? had the tyrant's guilt

Awaken'd vengeance to the deed of death?

Or blazed they for a brother's obsequies, The sport and mirth of murder?.. Like the lights

Which there upon Aberfraw's royal walls
Are waving with the wind, the painful
doubt

Fluctuates within him... Onward drives the gale...

On flies the bark; . . and she hath reach'd at length

Her haven, safe from her unequall'd way!

And now, in louder and yet louder joy Clamorous, the happy mariners all-hail Their native shore, and now they leap to land.

There stood an old man on the beach to wait

The comers from the ocean; and he ask'd,

Is it the Prince? And Madoc knew his voice,

And turn'd to him and fell upon his neck;

For it was Urien who had foster'd him, Had loved him like a child; and Madoc loved.

Even as a father loved he that old man.

My Sister? quoth the Prince...Oh, she
and I

Have wept together, Madoc, for thy loss...

That long and cruel absence! . . She and I, 60

Hour after hour and day by day, have look'd

Toward the waters, and with aching eyes And aching heart, sate watching every sail.

And David and our brethren? cried the Prince,

As they moved on. . . But then old Urien's lips
Were slow at answer; and he spake,

and paused In the first breath of utterance, as to

choose
Fit words for uttering some unhappy

More blood, quoth Madoc, yet? Hath
David's fear

Forced him to still more cruelty?
Alas.. 70

Woe for the house of Owen!

Evil stars, Replied the old man, ruled o'er thy brethren's birth.

From Dolwyddelan driven, his peaceful home.

Poor Yorwerth sought the church's sanctuary;

The murderer follow'd; . . Madoc, need I say

Who sent the sword?.. Llewelyn, his brave boy, [realm, Where wanders he? in this his rightful Houseless and hunted; richly would the King

Gift the red hand that rid him of that fear!

Ririd, an outlaw'd fugitive, as yet 80 Eludes his deadly purpose; Rodri lives, A prisoner he. . . I know not in what fit Of natural mercy from the slaughter spared.

Oh, if my dear old master saw the wreck And scattering of his house!.. that princely race!

The beautiful band of brethren that they were!

Madoc made no reply, . . he closed his eyes,

Groaning. But Urien, for his heart was full.

Loving to linger on the woe, pursued: I did not think to live to such an hour 90 Of joy as this! and often, when my sight Turn'd dizzy from the ocean, overcome With heavy anguish, Madoc, I have prayed

That God would please to take me to his rest.

So as he ceased his speech, a sudden shout

Of popular joy awakened Madoc's ear; And calling then to mind the festal fires, He ask'd their import. The old man replied,

It is the giddy people merry-making

To welcome their new Queen; unheeding they 100 The shame and the reproach to the long

Of our old royalty!.. Thy brother weds
The Saxon's sister.

What!.. in loud reply Madoc exclaim'd, hath he forgotten all? David! King Owen's son,.. my father's

son, . . He wed the Saxon, . . the Plantagenet! Quoth Urien, He so doats, as she had dropt

Some philtre in his cup, to lethargize The British blood that came from Owen's veins.

Three days his halls have echoed to the song

Of joyaunce.

Shame! foul shame! that they should hear

Songs of such joyaunce! cried the indignant Prince:

Oh that my Father's hall, where I have heard

The songs of Corwen and of Keiriog's day,

Should echo this pollution! Will the

Brook this alliance, this unnatural tie?

There is no face but wears a courtly smile,

Urien replied: Aberfraw's ancient towers

Beheld no pride of festival like this, No like solemnities, when Owen came In conquest, and Gowalchmai struck the harp.

Only Goervyl, careless of the pomp, Sits in her solitude, lamenting thee.

Saw ye not then my banner? quoth the Lord

Of Ocean; on the topmast-head it stood

To tell the tale of triumph; . . or did night

Hide the glad signal, and the joy hath yet

To reach her?

Now had they almost attain'd The palace portal. Urien stopt and said.

The child should know your coming; it is long

Since she hath heard a voice that to her heart

Spake gladness; . . none but I must tell her this.

So Urien sought Goervyl, whom he found

Alone and gazing on the moonlight

Oh you are welcome, Urien! cried the maid

There was a ship came sailing hitherward..

I could not see his banner, for the night Closed in so fast around her; but my heart

Indulged a foolish hope!

The old man replied, With difficult effort keeping his heart down.

God in his goodness may reserve for us That blessing yet! I have yet life enow To trust that I shall live to see the day, Albeit the number of my years well nigh Be full.

Ill-judging kindness! said the maid.

Have I not nursed for two long wretched years

That miserable hope, which every day Grew weaker, like a baby sick to death, Yet dearer for its weakness day by day! No, never shall we see his daring bark! I knew and felt it in the evil hour 151 When forth she fared! I felt it then! that kiss

Was our death parting! . . And she paused to curb

The agony: anon,.. But thou hast been To learn their tidings, Urion?.. He replied.

In half-articulate words, . . They said, my child,

That Madoc lived, . . that soon he would be here.

She had received the shock of happiness:

Urien! she cried.. thou art not mocking me!

Nothing the old man spake, but spread his arms 160

Sobbing aloud. Goervyl from their hold Started, and sunk upon her brother's breast.

Recovering first, the aged Urien said, Enough of this, . . there will be time for this.

My children! better it behoves ye now To seek the King. And, Madoc, I beseech thee, Bear with thy brother! gently bear with him,

My gentle Prince! he is the headstrong slave

Of passions unsubdued; he feels no tie Of kindly love, or blood;.. provoke him not,

Madoc! . . It is his nature's malady.

Thou good old man! replied the Prince, be sure

I shall remember what to him is due, What to myself; for I was in my youth Wisely and well train'd up; nor yet hath time

Effaced the lore my foster-father taught.

Haste, haste! exclaim'd Goervyl; . . for her heart

Smote her in sudden terrorat the thought Of Yorwerth, and of Owen's broken house;..

I dread his dark suspicions!

Not for me Suffer that fear, my sister! quoth the

Prince. 181
Safe is the straight and open way I tread:

Nor hath God made the human heart so

That thou or I should have a danger there.

So saying, they toward the palace gate • Went on, ere yet Aberfraw had received The tidings of her wanderer's glad return.

II. THE MARRIAGE FEAST

The guests were seated at the festal board:

Green rushes strew'd the floor; high in the hall

Was David; Emma, in her bridal robe, In youth, in beauty, by her husband's side

Sate at the marriage feast. The monarch raised

His eyes, he saw the mariner approach; Madoc! he cried; strong nature's impulses Prevail'd, and with a holy joy he met His brother's warm embrace.

With that what peals
Of exultation shook Aberfraw's tower!
How then re-echoing rang the home of
Kings.

When from subduëd Ocean, from the World

That he had first foreseen, he first had found,

Came her triumphant child! The mariners,

A happy band, enter the clamorous hall; Friend greets with friend, and all are friends; one joy

Fills with one common feeling every heart.

And strangers give and take the welcoming

Of hand and voice and eye. That boisterous joy

At length allay'd, the board was spread anew, 20

Anew the horn was brimm'd, the central hearth

Built up anew for later revelries.

Now to the ready feast! the seneschal Duly below the pillars ranged the crew; Toward the guest's most honourable seat The King himself led his brave brother; . . then,

Eyeing the lovely Saxon as he spake, Here, Madoc, see thy sister! thou hast been

Long absent, and our house hath felt the while

Sad diminution; but my arm at last 30 Hath rooted out rebellion from the land; And I have stablish'd now our ancient house.

Grafting a seyon from the royal tree
Of England on the sceptre; so shall
peace

Bless our dear country.

Long and happy years Await my sovereigns! thus the Prince replied,

And long may our dear country rest in peace!

Enough of sorrow hath our royal house Known in the field of battles, . . yet we reap'd

The harvest of renown

Ay. . . many a day, 40 David replied, together have we led The onset. . . Dost thou not remember,

brother,

How in that hot and unexpected charge On Keiriog's bank, we gave the enemy Their welcoming?

And Berwyn's after-strife! Quoth Madoc, as the memory kindled

The fool that day, who in his masque attire

Sported before King Henry, wished in

Fitlier habiliments of javolin-proof! And yet not more precipitate that fool Dropt his mock weapons, than the

archers cast Desperate their bows and quivers-full

When we leapt on, and in the mire and blood

Trampled their banner!

That, exclaimed the King, That was a day indeed, which I may still Proudly remember, proved as I have been

In conflicts of such perilous assay,

That Saxon combat seem'd like woman's

When with the traitor Hoel I did wage The deadly battle, then was I in truth 60 Put to the proof; no vantage-ground was there.

Nor famine, nor disease, nor storms to

But equal, hard, close battle, man to

Briton to Briton. By my soul, pursued The tyrant, heedless how from Madoc's

Flash'd the quick wrath like lightning, ... though I knew

The rebel's worth, his prowess then excited

Unwelcome wonder; even at the last, When stiff with toil and faint with wounds, he raised

Feebly his broken sword, . .

Then Madoc's grief Wherefore, David, Found utterance: dost thou rouse

The memory now of that unhappy day,

That thou should'st wish to hide from earth and heaven?

Not in Aberfraw. . . not to me this tale! Tell it the Saxon!.. he will join thy triumph, . .

He hates the race of Owen! .. but I loved

My brother Hoel, .. loved him?.. that ve knew!

I was to him the dearest of his kin,

And he my own heart's brother.

David's cheek Grew pale and dark; he bent his broad black brow

Full upon Madoc's glowing countenance; Art thou return'd to brave me? to my

To praise the rebel bastard? to insult The royal Saxon, my affianced friend? I hate the Saxon! Madoc cried: not yet Have I forgotten, how from Keiriog's shame

Flying, the coward wreak'd his cruelty On our poor brethren!.. David, seest thou never

Those eveless spectres by thy bridal bed? Forget that horror? . . may the fire of God

Blast my right hand, or ever it be link'd With that accursed Plantagenet's!

The while.

Impatience struggled in the heaving breast

Of David; every agitated limb

Shook with ungovernable wrath; the

Who chafed his feet, in fear suspends his

In fear the guests gaze on him silently; His eyeballs flash'd, strong anger choked his voice.

He started up. . . Him Emma, by the hand

Gently retaining, held, with gentle words Calming his rage. Goervyl too in tears Besought her generous brother: he had met

Emma's reproaching glance, and selfreproved.

While the warm blood flush'd deeper o'er his cheek.

Thus he replied; I pray you pardon me,

My Sister-Queen! nay, you will learn to love

This high affection for the race of Owen, Yourself the daughter of his royal house By better ties than blood.

Grateful the Queen Replied, by winning smile and eloquent eye 110

Thanking the gentle Prince: a moment's pause

Ensued; Goervyl then with timely speech

Thus to the wanderer of the waters spake:

Madoc, thou hast not told us of the

Beyond the ocean and the paths of man. A lovely land it needs must be, my brother,

Or sure you had not sojourn'd there so

Of me forgetful, and my heavy hours Of grief and solitude and wretched hope.

Where is Cadwallon? for one bark alone 120

I saw come sailing here.

The tale you ask Is long, Goervyl, said the mariner, And I in truth am weary. Many moons

And I in truth am weary. Many moons Have wax'd and waned, since from that distant world,

The country of my dreams and hope and faith,

We spread the homeward sail: a goodly world,

My Sister! thou wilt see its goodliness, And greet Cadwallon there. . . But this shall be

To-morrow's tale; . . indulge we now the feast! . .

You know not with what joy we mariners Behold a sight like this.

Smiling he spake, 131
And turning, from the sewer's hand he took

The flowing mead. David, the while, relieved

From rising jealousies, with better eye Regards his venturous brother. Let the Bard,

Exclaim'd the King, give his accustom'd lay;

For sweet, I know, to Madoc is the song He loved in earlier years.

Then, strong of voice,

The officer proclaim'd the sovereign will, Bidding the hall be silent; loud he spake,

And smote the sounding pillar with his wand,

And hush'd the banqueters. The chief of Bards

Then raised the ancient lay.

Thee, Lord! he sung, O Father! Thee, whose wisdom, Thee, whose power,

Whose love, . . all love, all power, all wisdom, Thou!

Tongue cannot utter, nor can heart conceive.

He in the lowest depth of Being framed The imperishable mind; in every change.

Through the great circle of progressive life,

He guides and guards, till evil shall be known,

And being known as evil, cease to be; And the pure soul, emancipate by Death,

The Enlarger, shall attain its end predoom'd,

The eternal newness of eternal joy.

He left this lofty theme; he struck the harp

To Owen's praise, swift in the course of wrath,

Father of Heroes. That proud day he sung.

When from green Erin came the insulting host,

Lochlin's long burthens of the flood, and they

Who left their distant homes in evil hour, 160

The death-doom'd Normen. There was heaviest toil,

There deeper tumult, where the dragon race

Of Mona trampled down the humbled head

Of haughty power; the sword of slaughter carved

Food for the yellow-footed fowl of heaven,

And Menai's waters, burst with plunge on plunge,

Curling above their banks with tempestswell

Their bloody billows heaved.

The long-past days
Came on the mind of Madoo, as he heard
That song of triumph; on his sun-burnt
brow 170

Sate exultation:..other thoughts arose, As on the fate of all his gallant house Mournful he mused; oppressive memory swell'd

His bosom, over his fix'd eye-balls swam The tear's dim lustre, and the loudtoned harp

Rung on his ear in vain; . . its silence first

Roused him from dreams of days that were no more.

III. CADWALLON

THEN on the morrow, at the festal board, The Lord of Ocean thus began his tale.

My heart beat high when with the favouring wind

We sail'd away; Aberfraw! when thy towers,

And the huge headland of my mother isle,

Shrunk and were gone.

But, Madoc, I would learn, Quoth David, how this enterprize arose, And the wild hope of worlds beyond the sea;

For, at thine outset, being in the war, I did not hear from vague and common fame

The moving cause. Sprung it from bardic lore.

The hidden wisdom of the years of old, Forgotten long? or did it visit thee In dreams that come from Heaven?

The Prince replied, Thou shalt hear all; . . but if, amid the tale.

Strictly sincere, I haply should rehearse Aught to the King ungrateful, let my brother

Be patient with the involuntary fault.

I was the guest of Rhys at Dinevawr, And there the tidings found me, that our sire 20

Was gather'd to his fathers: . . not alone The sorrow came; the same ill messenger

Told of the strife that shook our royal house.

When Hoel, proud of prowess, seized the throne

Which you, for elder claim and lawful birth,

Challenged in arms. With all a brother's love,

I on the instant hurried to prevent

Theimpious battle:..all the day I sped; Night did not stay me on my eager way..

Where'er I pass'd, new rumour raised new fear. . . 30

Midnight, and morn, and noon, I hurried on,

And the late eve was darkening when I reach'd

Arvon, the fatal field. . . The sight, the sounds,

Live in my memory now, . . for all was done!

For horse and horseman, side by side in death,

Lay on the bloody plain; . . a host of

And not one living soul, . . and not one sound.

One human sound; . . only the raven's wing.

Which rose before my coming, and the neigh

Of wounded horses, wandering o'er the plain.

Night now was coming on; a man approach'd

And bade me to his dwelling nigh at hand.

Thither I turn'd, too weak to travel more:

For I was overspent with weariness,

And having now no hope to bear me up. Trouble and bodily labour master'd me. I ask'd him of the battle:.. who had fallen

He knew not, nor to whom the lot of war

Had given my father's sceptre. Here, said he,

I came to seek if haply I might find 50 Some wounded wretch, abandon'd else to death.

My search was vain, the sword of civil war

Had bit too deeply.

Soon we reach'd his home, A lone and lowly dwelling in the hills, By a grey mountain stream. Beside the hearth

There sate an old blind man; his head was raised

As he were listening to the coming sounds,

And in the fire-light shone his silver locks.

Father, said he who guided me, I bring A guest to our poor hospitality; 60 And then he brought me water from the

brook,

And homely fare, and I was satisfied:
That done, he piled the hearth, and
spread around

The rushes of ropose. I laid me down; But worn with toil, and full of many fears.

Sleep did not visit me: the quiet sounds Of nature troubled my distemper'd sense:

My ear was busy with the stirring gale, The moving leaves, the brook's perpetual flow.

So on the morrow languidly I rose, And faint with fever: but a rostless wish

Was working in me, and I said, My host, Wilt thou go with me to the battlo-field, That I may search the slain? for in the fray

My brethren fought; and though with all my speed

I strove to reach them ere the strife began,

Alas, I sped too slow!

Grievest thou for that? He answer'd, grievest thou that thou art spared

The shame and guilt of that unhappy strife,

Briton with Briton in unnatural war?

Nay, I replied, mistake me not! I came To reconcile the chiefs; they might have heard

Their brother's voice.

Their brother's voice? said he, Was it not so?.. And thou, too, art the son

Of Owen!.. Yesternight I did not know The cause there is to pity thee. Alas, Two brethren thou wilt lose when one shall fall!..

Lament not him whom death may save from guilt;

For all too surely in the conqueror

Thou wilt find one whom his own fears henceforth

Must make to all his kin a perilous foe.

I felt as though he wrong'd my father's sons,

And raised an angry eye, and answer'd him, . .

My brethren love me.

Then the old man cried, Oh what is Princes' love? what are the ties

Of blood, the affections growing as we grow,

If but ambition come?.. Thou deemest sure

Thy brethren love thee; . . ye have play'd together

In childhood, shared your riper hopes and fears,

Fought side by side in battle: . . they may be

Brave, generous, all that once their father was,

Whom ye, I ween, call virtuous.

At the name,

With pious warmth, I cried, Yes, he was good,

And great, and glorious! Gwyneth's ancient annals

Boast not a name more noble. In the war

Fearless he was, . . the Saxon found him so:

Wise was his counsel, and no supplicant For justice ever from his palace-gate Unrighted turn'd away. King Owen's name 109

Shall live to after times without a blot !

There were two brethren once of kingly

The old man replied: they loved each other well.

And when the one was at his dying hour, It then was comfort to him that he left So dear a brother, who would duly pay A father's duties to his orphan boy.

And sure he loved the orphan, and the bov

With all a child's sincerity loved him, And learnt to call him father: so the years

Went on, till when the orphan gain'd the age

Of manhood, to the throne his uncle

The young man claim'd a fair inheritance.

His father's lands; and . . mark what follows. Prince!

At midnight he was seized, and to his

The brazen plate was held. . . He cried aloud.

He look'd around for help, . . he only

His Uncle's ministers, prepared to do Their wicked work, who to the red hot brass

Forced his poor eyes, and held the open

Till the long agony consumed the sense; And when their hold relax'd, it had been worth

The wealth of worlds if he could then havo seen,

Dreadful to him and hideous as they

Their ruffian faces!.. I am blind, young Prince,

And I can tell how sweet a thing it is To see the blessed light!

Must more be told? What farther agonies he yet endured? Or hast thou known the consummated crime.

And heard Cynetha's fate?

A painful glow Inflamed my cheek, and for my father's

brow'd man

Beheld the burning flush, the uneasy

That knew not where to rest. Come! we will search

The slain! arising from his seat, he said. I follow'd; to the field of fight we went, And over steeds and arms and men we held

Our way in silence. Here it was, quoth

The fiercest war was waged; lo! in what heaps

Man upon man fell slaughter'd! Then my heart

Smote me, and my knees shook; for I beheld

Where, on his conquer'd foemen, Hoel lay.

He paused, his heart was full, and on his tongue

The imperfect utterance died; a general gloom

Sadden'd the hall, and David's cheek grew pale.

Commanding first his feelings, Madoc broke

The oppressive silence.

Then Cadwallon took My hand, and, pointing to his dwelling, cried,

Prince, go and rest thee there, for thou hast need

Of rest; . . the care of sepulture be mine. Nor did I then comply, refusing rest, 160 Till I had seen in holy ground inearth'd My poor lost brother. Wherefore, he exclaim'd,

(And I was awed by his severer eye)

Wouldst thou be pampering thy distempered mind?

Affliction is not sent in vain, young

From that good God, who chastens whom he loves.

Oh! there is healing in the bitter cup! Go yonder, and before the unerring will Bow, and have comfort! To the hut I went.

And there beside the lonely mountain-

I felt the shame of guilt. The dark- I veil'd my head, and brooded on the past.

He tarried long; I felt the hours pass by, As in a dream of morning, when the

mind.

Half to reality awaken'd, blends

With airy visions and vague phantasies Her dim perception; till at length his step

Aroused me, and he came. I question'd him.

Where is the body? hast thou bade the priests

Perform due masses for his soul's repose?

He answer'd me, The rain and dew of heaven 180
Will fall upon the turf that covers him,
And greener grass will flourish on his grave.

But rouse thee, Prince! there will be hours enough

For mournful memory; .. it befits thee now

Take counsel for thyself:.. the son of Owen

Lives not in safety here.

I bow'd my head Opprest by heavy thoughts: all wretchedness

The present; darkness on the future lay; Fearful and gloomy both. I answer'd not.

Hath power seduced thy wishes? he pursued,

And wouldst thou seize upon thyfather's

throne?

Now God forbid! quoth I. Now God forbid!

Quoth he; ... but thou art dangerous,
Prince! and what
Shall shield thee from the iceleus arm

Shall shield thee from the jealous arm of power?

Think of Cynetha!.. the unsleeping eye
Of justice hath not closed upon his
wrongs;

At length the avenging arm is gone abroad,

One woe is past, . . woe after woe comes on, . .

There is no safety here, . . here thou must be

The victim or the murderer! Does thy heart 200

Shrink from the alternative? . . look round! . . behold

What shelter, . . whither wouldst thou fly for peace?

What if the asylum of the Church were safe. . .

Were there no better purposes ordain'd For that young arm, that heart of noble hopes?

Son of our kings, . . of old Cassibelan, Great Caratach, immortal Arthur's line, Oh, shall the blood of that heroic race Stagnate in cloister-sloth? . . Or wouldst thou leave

Thy native isle, and beg in awkward phrase 210

Some foreign sovereign's charitable grace, . .

The Saxon or the Frank, . . and earn his gold,

The hireling in a war whose cause thou know'st not,

Whose end concerns not thee?

I sate and gazed, Following his eye with wonder, as he paced

Before me to and fro, and listening still, Though now he paced in silence. But

The old man's voice and step awakened

Each from his thought; I will come out, said he.

That I may sit beside the brook, and feel

The comfortable sun. As forth he came,

I could not choose but look upon his face: Gently on him had gentle nature laid

The weight of years; all passions that disturb

Were pass'd away; the stronger lines of grief

Soften'd and settled, till they told of grief

By patient hope and piety subdued: His eyes, which had their hue and brightness left,

Fix'd lifelessly, or objectless they roll'd, Nor moved by sense, nor animate with thought. On a smooth stone beside the stream he | Child of my lawless love.

His wonted seat in the sunshine. Thou hast lost

A brother, Prince, he said . . or the dull

Of age deceived me. Peace be with his soul !

And may the curse that lies upon the

Of Owen turn away! Wilt thou come hither,

And let me feel thy face?.. I wondered at him:

Yet while his hand perused my linea-

Deep awe and reverence fill'd me. O my God.

Bless this young man! he cried; a perilous state

Is his; . . but let not thou his father's sins

Be visited on him!

I raised my eyes Enquiring, to Cadwallon; Nay, young Prince.

Despise not thou the blind man's prayer! he cried:

It might have given thy father's dying

A hope, that sure he needed . . for, know thou.

It is the victim of thy father's crime, Who asks a blessing on thee!

At his feet I fell, and clasp'd his knees: he raised me up;..

Blind as I was, a mutilated wretch, 250 Athing that nature owns not, Isurvived, Loathing existence, and with impious voice

Accused the will of heaven, and groan'd for death.

Years pass'd away; this universal blank Became familiar, and my soul reposed On God, and I had comfort in my prayers.

But there were blessings for me yet in

Thy father knew not, when his bloody

All hope of an avenger had cut off, How there existed then an unborn babe. Year after

I lived a lonely and forgotten wretch, Before Cadwallon knew his father's fate, Long years and years before I knew my son:

For never, till his mother's dying hour, Learnt he his dangerous birth. He sought me then:

He woke my soul once more to human ties; . .

I hope he hath not wean'd my heart from heaven.

Life is so precious now!..

Dear good old man! And lives he still? Goervyl ask'd, in tears: Madoc replied, I scarce can hope to find

A father's welcome at my distant home. I left him full of days, and ripe for death; And the last prayer Cynetha breathed upon me

Went like a death-bed blessing to my heart!

When evening came, toward the echoing shore

I and Cadwallon walk'd together forth: Bright with dilated glory shone the west; But brighter lay the ocean-flood below, The burnish'd silver sea, that heaved and flash'd

Its restless rays, intolerably bright.

Prince, quoth Cadwallon, thou hast rode the waves

In triumph, when the invaders felt thine arm.

Oh what a nobler conquest might be

There, ... upon that wide field ! .. What meanest thou?

I cried. . . That yonder waters are not spread

A boundless waste, a bourne impassable!.

That man should rule the Elements!... that there

Might manly courage, manly wisdom

Some happy isle, some undiscovered

Some resting place for peace. . . Oh that my soul

Could seize the wings of Morning! soon would I

Behold that other world, where yonder sun

Speeds now, to dawn in glory!

As he spake, Conviction came upon my startled mind, Like lightning on the midnight traveller. Icaught his hand; . . Kinsman and guide and friend,

Yea, let us go together! . . Down we sate,

Full of the vision on the echoing shore; One only object fill'd ear, eye, and thought: 300

We gazed upon the aweful world of waves.

And talk'd and dreamt of years that were to come.

IV. THE VOYAGE

Not with a heart unmoved I left thy shores,

Dear native isle! oh . . not without a

As thy fair uplands lesson'd on the view, Cast back the long involuntary look! The morning cheer'd our outset; gentle airs

Curl'd the blue deep, and bright the summer sun

Play'd o'er the summer ocean, when our barks

Began their way.

And they were gallant barks, As ever through the raging billows rode; And many a tempest's buffeting they bore.

Their sails all swelling with the eastern breeze.

Their tighten'd cordage clattering to the mast,

Steady they rode the main: the gale

Sung in the shrouds, the sparkling waters hiss'd

Before, and froth'd and whiten'd far behind.

Day after day, with one auspicious wind, Right to the setting sun we held our course. My hope had kindled every heart; they blest

The unvarying breeze, whose unabating strength

Still sped us onward; and they said that Heaven 20

Favour'd the bold emprize.

Mounting the mast-tower-top, with eager ken

They gazed, and fancied in the distant

Their promised shore, beneath the evening cloud,

Or seen, low lying, through the haze of morn.

I too with eyes as anxious watch'd the waves,

Though patient, and prepared for long delay;

For not on wild adventure had I rush'd With giddy speed, in some delirious fit Of fancy; but in many a tranquil hour Weigh'd well the attempt, till hope matured to faith.

Day after day. day after day the same, . . A weary waste of waters! still the breeze Hung heavy in our sails, and we held on One even course: a second week was gone,

And now another past, and still the same,

Waves beyond waves, the interminable

What marvel, if at length the mariners Grew sick with long expectance? I beheld

Dark looks of growing restlessness, I heard 40

Distrust's low murmurings; nor avail'd it long

To see and not perceive. Shame had awhile

Represt their fear, till like a smother'd fire

It burst, and spread with quick contagion round,

And strengthen'd as it spread. They spake in tones

Which might not be mistaken; ... They had done

What men dared do, ventured where never keel

Had cut the deep before: still all was sea,

The same unbounded ocean!..to proceed

Were tempting heaven.

I heard with feign'd surprise, And, pointing then to where our fellow bark, 51

Gay with her fluttering streamers and full sails.

Rode, as in triumph, o'er the element, I ask'd them what their comrades there would deem

Of those so bold ashore, who, when aday, Perchance an hour, might crown their glorious toil,

Shrunk then, and coward-like return'd to meet

Mockery and shame? True, they had ventured on

In seas unknown, beyond where ever man

Had plough'd the billows yet: more reason so 60

Why they should now, like him whose happy speed

Well nigh hath run the race, with higher hope

Press onward to the prize. But late they said,

Marking the favour of the steady gale, That Heaven was with us; Heaven youchsafed us still

Fair seas and favouring skies: nor need we pray

For other aid, the rest was in ourselves; Nature had given it, when she gave to man

Courage and constancy.

They answer'd not,
Awhile obedient; but I saw with
dread 70

The silent sullenness of cold assent.

Then, with what fearful eagerness I gazed

At earliest daybreak, o'er the distant deep!

How sick at heart with hope, when evening closed,

Gazed through the gathering shadows! . . but I saw

The sun still sink below the endless waves,

And still at morn, beneath the farthest sky.

Unbounded ocean heaved. Day after day

Before the steady gale we drove along,...

Day after day! The fourth week now

had pass'd; 80 Still all around was sea, . . the eternal

So long that we had voyaged on so fast, And still at morning where we were at

night,

And where we were at morn, at nightfall still,

The centre of that drear circumference, Progressive, yet no change!..almost it seem'd

That we had pass'd the mortal bounds of space,

And speed was toiling in infinity.

My days were days of fear, my hours of rest

Were like a tyrant's slumber. Sullen looks, 99

Eyes turn'd on me, and whispers meant to meet

My ear, and loud despondency, and talk Of home, now never to be seen again, . . I suffer'd these, dissembling as I could, Till that avail'd no longer. Resolute The men came round me: They had shown enough

Of courage now, enough of constancy; Still to pursue the desperate enterprize Were impious madness! they had deem'd, indeed,

More reason now to think offended God, When man's presumptuous folly strove to pass

The fated limits of the world, had sent His winds, to waft us to the death we sought.

Their lives were dear, they bade me know, and they

Many, and I, the obstinate, but one.

With that, attending no reply, they hail'd

Our fellow bark, and told their fix'd resolve.

A shout of joy approved. Thus, desperate now,

I sought my solitary cabin: there 110 Confused with vague tumultuous feelings lay,

And to remembrance and reflection lost,

Knew only I was wretched.

Thus entranced Cadwallon found me; shame, and grief, and pride,

And baffled hope, and fruitless anger

swell'd

Within me. All is over! I exclaim'd; Yet not in me, my friend, hath time produced

These tardy doubts and shameful fickleness;

I have not fail'd, Cadwallon! Nay, he said,

The coward fears which persecuted me Have shown what thou hast suffer'd. We have yet

One hope . . I pray'd them to proceed a day, . .

But one day more; . . this little have I gain'd,

And here will wait the issue; in yon bark I am not needed, . . they are masters there.

One only day!.. The gale blew strong, the bark

Sped through the waters; but the silent hours.

Who make no pause, went by; and center'd still,

We saw the dreary vacancy of heaven Close round our narrow view, when that brief term,

The last poor respite of our hopes, expired.

They shorten'd sail, and call'd with coward prayer

For homeward winds. Why, what poor slaves are we,

In bitterness I cried; the sport of chance;

Left to the mercy of the elements, Or the more wayward will of such

Or the more wayward will of such as these,

Blind tools and victims of their destiny!
Yea, Madoc! he replied, the Elements
Master indeed the feeble powers of man!
Not to the shores of Cambria will thy
ships
140

Win back their shameful way ! . . or HE, whose will

Unchains the winds, hath bade them minister

To aid us, when all human hope was gone, Or we shall soon eternally repose

From life's long voyage.

As he spake, I saw The clouds hang thick and heavy o'er the deep,

And heavily, upon the long slow swell, The vessel labour'd on the labouring sea. The reef-points rattled on the shivering sail;

At fits the sudden gust howl'd ominous, Anon with unremitting fury raged; 151 High roll'd the mighty billows, and the blast

Swept from their sheeted sides the showery foam.

Vain now were all the seamen's homeward hopes,

Vain all their skill!.. we drove before the storm.

'Tis pleasant, by the cheerful hearth, to hear

Of tempests and the dangers of the deep, And pause at times, and feel that we are safe;

Then listen to the perilous tale again, And with an eager and suspended soul, Woo terror to delight us... But to hear The roaring of the raging elements, ... To know all human skill, all human

strength,
Avail not, . . to look round, and only see
The mountain wave incumbent with its

weight

Of bursting waters o'er the reeling bark, . .

O God, this is indeed a dreadful thing!
And he who hath endured the horror once
Of such an hour, doth never hear the
storm

Howl round his home, but he remembers it,

And thinks upon the suffering mariner.

Onward we drove: with unabating force

The tempest raged; night added to the storm

New horrors, and the morn arose o'erspread

With heavier clouds. The weary mariners

Call'd on Saint Cyric's aid; and I too placed

My hope on Heaven, relaxing not the while

Our human efforts. Ye who dwell at home,

Ye do not know the terrors of the main!
When the winds blow, ye walk along
the shore,
180

And as the curling billows leap and toss, Fable that Ocean's mermaid Shepherdess Drives her white flocks afield, and warns in time [warn'd

The wary fisherman. Gwenhidwy When we had no retreat! My secret heart

Almost had fail'd me. . . Were the Elements

Confounded in perpetual conflict here, Sea, Air, and Heaven? Or were we perishing,

Where at their source the Floods, for ever thus,

Beneath the nearer influence of the moon,

Labour'd in these mad workings? Did the Waters

Here on their outmost circle meet the void,

The verge and brink of Chaos? Or this Earth, . .

Was it indeed a living thing,..its breath The ebb and flow of Ocean? and had we Reach'd the storm rampart of its Sanctuary,

The insuperable boundary, raised to guard

Its mysteries from the eye of man profane?

Three dreadful nights and days we drove along:

The fourth the welcome rain came rattling down, 200

The wind had fallen, and through the broken cloud

Appeared the bright dilating blue of heaven.

Embolden'd now, I call'd the mariners: . .

Vain were it should we bend a homeward course,

Driven by the storm so far; they saw our barks,

For service of that long and perilous way Disabled, and our food belike to fail.

Silent they heard, reluctant in assent; Anon, they shouted joyfully, . . I look'd And saw a bird slow sailing overhead,

His long white pinions by the sunbeam edged 211

As though with burnish'd silver; ...

Heard I so sweet a music as his cry!

Yet three days more, and hope more eager now,

Sure of the signs of land, . . weed-shoals, and birds

Who flock'd the main, and gentle airs which breathed,

Or seem'd to breathe, fresh fragrance from the shore,

On the last evening, a long shadowy line Skirted the sea; . . how fast the night closed in!

I stood upon the deck, and watch'd till dawn.

But who can tell what feelings fill'd my heart.

When like a cloud the distant land arose Grey from the ocean, . . when we left the ship.

And cleft, with rapid oars, the shallow wave,

Andstood triumphant on another world!

V. LINCOYA

Madoc had paused awhile; but every

Still watch'd his lips, and every voice was hush'd.

Soon as I leapt ashore, pursues the Lord Of Ocean, prostrate on my face I fell,

Kiss'd the dear earth, and pray'd with thankful tears.

Hard by a brook was flowing; . . never yet,

Even from the gold-tipt horn of victory With harp and song amid my father's hall. Pledged I so sweet a draught, as lying We now besought for food; at once there, 40

Beside that streamlet's brink!.. to feel the ground,

To quaff the cool clear water, to inhale The breeze of land, while fears and dangers past

Recurr'd and heighten'd joy, as summer

Make the fresh evening lovelier!

To the shore

The natives throng'd; astonish'd, they beheld

Our winged barks, and gazed with wonderment

On the strange garb, the bearded countenance

And the white skin, in all unlike themselves.

I see with what enquiring eyes you ask What men were they? Of dark-brown colour, tinged 20

With sunny redness; wild of eye; their brows

So smooth, as never yet anxiety

Nor busy thought had made a furrow there;

Beardless, and each to each of lineaments

So like, they seem'd but one great family,

Their loins were loosely cinctured, all beside

Bare to the sun and wind; and thus their limbs

Unmanacled display'd the truest forms Of strength and beauty. Fearless sure they were,

And while they eyed us grasp'd their spears, as if,

Like Britain's injured but unconquer'd sons,

They too had known how perilous it was To let a stranger, if he came in arms, Set foot upon their land.

But soon the guise Of men nor purporting nor fearing ill, Gain'd confidence; their wild distrustful looks

Assumed a milder meaning; over one I cast my mantle, on another's head The velvet bonnet placed, and all was joy.

We now besought for food; at once they read 40

Our gestures, but I cast a hopeless eye
On hills and thickets, woods, and marshy plains,

A waste of rank luxuriance all around. Thus musing to a lake I follow'd them, Left when the rivers to their summer course

Withdrew; they scatter'd on its water

Of such strange potency, that soon the shoals

Coop'd there by Nature prodigally kind, Floated inebriate. As I gazed, a deer Sprung from the bordering thicket; the true shaft

Scarce with the distant victim's blood had stain'd

Its point, when instantly he dropt and died.

Such deadly juice imbued it; yet on this

We made our meal unharm'd; and I perceived

The wisest leech that ever in our world Cull'd herbs of hidden virtue, was to these

A child in knowledge.

Sorrowing we beheld The night come on; but soon did night display

More wonders than it veil'd: innumerous tribes

From the wood-cover swarm'd, and darkness made 60

Their beauties visible; one while they stream'd

A bright blue radiance upon flowers which closed

Their gorgeous colours from the eye of day;

Now motionless and dark eluded search, Self-shrouded; and anon starring the sky

Rose like a shower of fire.

Our friendly hosts the hut, our that night's

Now led us to the hut, our that night's home,

A rude and spacious dwelling: twisted boughs,

And canes and withies formed the walls and roof;

And from the unhewn trunks which pillar'd it. Low nets of interwoven reeds were

hung.

With shouts of honour here they gather'd round me,

Ungarmented my limbs, and in a net With softest feathers lined, a pleasant couch.

They laid and left me.

To our ships return'd, After soft sojourn here we coasted on, Insatiate of the wonders and the charms

Of earth and air and sea. Thy summer woods.

Are lovely, O my mother isle! the birch Light bending on thy banks, thy elmy

Thy venerable oaks!.. But there, what forms

Of beauty clothed the inlands and the shore!

All these in stateliest growth, and mixt with these

Dark spreading cedar, and the cypress

Its pointed summit waving to the wind Like a long beacon flame; and loveliest Amid a thousand strange and lovely shapes,

The lofty palm, that with its nuts supplied

Beverage and food; they edged the shore and crown'd

The far-off highland summits, their straight stems

Bare without leaf or bough, erect and smooth,

Their tresses nodding like a crested

The plumage of the grove.

Will ye believe The wonders of the ocean? how its shoals

Sprang from the wave, like flashing light, . . took wing,

And twinkling with a silver glitterance. Flew through the air and sunshine? yet were these

To sight less wondrous than the tribe who swam,

Following like fowlers with uplifted eye Fell at my feet. Such friendly tokenings

Their falling quarry: . . language cannot

Their splendid tints; though in blue ocean seen,

Blue, darkly, deeply, beautifully blue. In all its rich variety of shades,

Suffused with glowing gold.

Heaven too had there

Its wonders: . . from a deep, black, heavy cloud,

What shall I say?..a shoot,..a trunk, . . an arm

Came down: . . yea! like a Demon's arm, it seized

The waters, Ocean smoked beneath its touch.

And rose like dust before the whirlwind's force.

But we sail'd onward over tranquil seas, Wafted by airs so exquisitely mild, 111 That even to breathe became an act of will

And sense and pleasure. Not a cloud by day

With purple islanded the dark-blue deep;

By night the quiet billows heaved and glanced

Under the moon, . . that heavenly Moon! so bright,

That many a midnight have I paced the deck.

Forgetful of the hours of due repose Yea till the Sun in his full majesty Went forth, like God beholding his own works.

Once when a chief was feasting us on

A captive served the food: I mark'd the youth,

For he had features of a gentler race; And oftentimes his eye was fix'd on me, With looks of more than wonder. We

return'd

At evening to our ships; at night a voice Came from the sea, the intelligible voice Of earnest supplication; he had swum To trust our mercy; up the side he

sprang, And look'd among the crew, and singling

As our short commerce with the native

Had taught, I proffer'd, and sincerity Gave force and meaning to the halflearnt forms.

For one we needed who might speak for

And well I liked the youth,—the open

Which character'd his face, the fearless heart.

Which gave at once and won full confidence.

So that night at my feet Lincoya slept.

When I display'd whate'er might gratify,

Whate'er surprise, with most delight he view'd

Our arms, the iron helm, the pliant mail, The buckler strong to save; and then he shook

The lance, and grasp'd the sword, and turn'd to me

With vehement words and gestures, every limb

Working with one strong passion; and he placed

The falchion in my hand, and gave the shield.

And pointed south and west, that I should go

To conquer and protect: anon he wept Aloud, and clasp'd my knees, and falling fain 150

He would have kiss'd my feet. Went we to shore?

Then would be labour restlessly to show A better place lay onward; and in the sand.

To south and west he drew the line of

And figured how a mighty river there Ran to the sea. The land bent westward soon.

And thus confirm'd we voyaged on to seek

The river inlet, following at the will Of our new friend: and we learnt after

Well pleased and proud to teach, what

this was call'd,

What that, with no unprofitable pains.

Nor light the joy I felt at hearing first The pleasant accents of my native tongue.

Albeit in broken words and tones uncouth.

Come from these foreign lips.

At length we came Where the great river, amid shoals and banks

And islands, growth of its own gathering spoils,

Through many a branching channel, wide and full.

Rush'd to the main. The gale was strong; and safe.

Amid the uproar of conflicting tides, 170 Our gallant vessels rode. A stream as broad

And turbid, when it leaves the Land of Hills.

Old Severn rolls; but banks so fair as these

Old Severn views not in his Land of

Nor even where his turbid waters swell And sully the salt sea.

So we sail'd on By shores now cover'd with impervious woods,

Now stretching wide and low, a reedy

And now through vales where earth profusely pour'd

Her treasures, gather'd from the first of davs.

Sometimes a savage tribe would welcome us.

By wonder from their lethargy of life Awaken'd; then again we voyaged on Through tracts all desolate, for days and

League after league, one green and fertile mead.

That fed a thousand herds.

A different scene

Rose on our view, of mount on mountain piled.

Which when I see again in memory,

Star-gazing Idris's stupendous seat Seems dwarf'd, and Snowdon with its eagle haunts

Shrinks, and is dwindled like a Saxon hill.

Here with Cadwallon and a chosen

I left the ships. Lincova guided us A toilsome way among the heights; at

We reach'd the village skirts; he bade

And raised his voice: the elders of the

Came forth, and led us to an ample hut, Which in the centre of their dwellings

The Stranger's House. They eyed us wondering,

Yet not for wonder ceased they to observe

Their hospitable rites: from hut to hut The tidings ran that strangers were arrived,

Fatigued and hungry and athirst; anon, Each from his means supplying us, came

And beverage such as cheers the weary man.

VI. ERILLYAB

AT morning their high-priest Ayayaca Came with our guide: the venerable

With reverential awe accosted us.

For we, he ween'd, were children of a

Mightier than they, and wiser, and by heaven

Beloved and favour'd more: he came to give

Fit welcome, and he led us to the Queen. The fate of war had reft her of her realm: Yet with affection and habitual awe,

And old remembrances, which gave their love

A deeper and religious character.

Fallen as she was, and humbled as they were,

Her faithful people still in all they could Obey'd Erillyab. She too in her mind Those recollections cherish'd, and such thoughts

As, though no hope allay'd their bitterness.

And pride to features which belike had borne.

Had they been fashion'd by a happier fate.

Meaning more gentle and more womanly. Yet not more worthy of esteem and love. She sate upon the threshold of her hut: For in the palace where her sires had reign'd

The conqueror dwelt. Her son was at her side.

A boy now near to manhood; by the door.

Bare of its bark, the head and branches

Stood a young tree with many a weapon hung.

Her husband's war-pole, and his monument.

There had his quiver moulder'd, his stone-axe

Had there grown green with moss, his bow-string there

Sung as it cut the wind.

She welcom'd us

With a proud sorrow in her mien; fresh

Were spread before us, and her gestures รณ์ป

That when he lived whose hand was wont to wield

Those weapons, . . that in better days, . . that ere

She let the tresses of her widowhood Grow wild, she could have given to guests like us

A worthier welcome. Soon a man approach'd.

Hooded with sable, his half-naked limbs Smear'd black; the people at his sight drew round,

women wail'd and wept, the children turn'd

And hid their faces on their mothers'

He to the Queen addrest his speech, then look'd

Around the children, and laid hands on

Of different sexes but of age alike

Some six years each, who at his touch shriek'd out.

Gave to her eye a spirit and a strength, But then Lincoya rose, and to my feet

Led them, and told me that the conquerors claim'd

These innocents for tribute; that the Priest

Would lay them on the altar of his god, Pluck out their little hearts in sacrifice, And with his brotherhood in impious rites

Feast on their flesh! . . I shudder'd, and my hand

Instinctively unsheathed the avenging sword.

As he with passionate and eloquent

Eve-speaking earnestness and quivering

Besought me to preserve himself, and those

Who now fell suppliant round me, . . youths and maids,

Grev-headed men, and mothers with their babes.

I caught the little victims up, I kiss'd Their innocent cheeks, I raised my eyes to heaven.

I call'd upon Almighty God to hear And bless the vow I made; in our own

tongue Was that sworn promise of protection

pledged . . Impetuous feeling made no pause for thought.

Heaven heard the vow; the suppliant multitude

Saw what was stirring in my heart: the

With eye inflamed and rapid answer, raised

His menacing hand; the tone, the bitter smile.

Interpreting his threat.

Meanwhile the Queen, 70 With watchful eye and steady countenance.

Had listen'd; now she rose and to the Priest

Address'd her speech. Low was her voice and calm.

As one who spake with effort to subdue Sorrow that struggled still; but while she spake

Her eve became more animate, her voice Rose to the height of feeling: on her son She call'd, and from her husband's monument

His battle-axe she took; and I could see That when she gave the boy his father's

She call'd his father's spirit to look on And bless them to his vengeance.

Silently The tribe stood listening as Erillyab

spake. The very Priest was awed: once he

essaved To answer; his tongue fail'd him, and his lip

Grew pale and fell. He to his country-

Of rage and shame and wonder full, return'd.

Bearing no victims for their shrines accurst.

But tidings that the Hoamen had cast

Their vassalage, roused to desperate revolt

By men in hue and speech and garment strange,

Who in their folly dared defy the power Of Aztlan.

When the King of Aztlan heard The unlook'd for tale, ere yet he roused his strength.

Or pitying our rash valour, or perhaps Curious to see the man so bravely rash, He sent to bid me to his court. Surprised.

I should have given to him no credulous faith.

But fearlessly Erillyab bade me trust 100 Her honourable foe. Unarm'd I went, Lincova with me to exchange our speech So as he could, of safety first assured; For to their devilish idols he had been A victim doom'd, and from the bloody

Flying been carried captive far away.

From early morning till the midnoon hour

We travell'd in the mountains; then a plain

Her features kindled to more majesty, | Open'd below, and rose upon the sight,

Like boundless ocean from a hill-top seen.

A beautiful and populous plain it was; Fair woods were there and fertilizing streams.

And pastures spreading wide, and villages

In fruitful groves embower'd, and stately towns,

And many a single dwelling specking it, As though for many a year the land had been

The land of peace. Below us, where the base

Of the great mountain to the level sloped,

A broad blue lake extended far and wide

Its waters, dark beneath the light of
noon.

120

There Aztlan stood upon the farther shore:

Amid the shade of trees its dwellings rose.

Their level roofs with turrets set around, And battlements all burnish'd white, which shone

Like silver in the sunshine. I beheld The imperial city, her far-circling walls, Her garden groves and stately palaces, Her temple's mountain-size, her thousand roofs;

And when I saw her might and majesty My mind misgave me then.

We reach'd the shore: A floating islet waited for me there, 131 The beautiful work of man. I set my feet

Upon green-growing herbs and flowers, and sate

Embower'd in odorous shrubs: four long light boats

Yoked to the garden, with accordant song.

And dip and dash of oar in harmony, Bore me across the lake.

Bore me across the lake.

Then in a car
Aloft by human bearers was I borne.

Aloft by human bearers was I borne; And through the city gate, and through long lines

Of marshall'd multitudes who throng'd the way,

We reach'd the palace court. Four priests were there;

Each held a burning censer in his hand, And strew'd the precious gum as I drew nigh,

And held the steaming fragrance forth to me,

Honouring me like a god. They led me

Where on his throne the royal Azteca Coanocotzin sate. Stranger, said he,

Welcome; and be this coming to thy weal!

A desperate warfare doth thy courage court;

But thou shalt see the people and the power 150

Whom thy deluded zeal would call to arms;

So may the knowledge make thee timely wise.

The valiant love the valiant. . . Come with me!

So saying he rose; we went together forth

To the Great Temple. 'Twas a huge square hill,

Or rather like a rock it seem'd, hewn out And squared by patient labour. Never

Did our forefathers, o'er beloved chief Fallen in his glory, heap a monument Of that prodigious bulk, though every

shield

Was laden for his grave, and every hand
Toil'd unremitting at the willing work
From morn till eve, all the long summer

day.

The ascent was lengthened with provoking art,

By steps which led but to a wearying path

Round the whole structure; then another flight,

Another road around, and thus a third, And yet a fourth, before we reach'd the height.

Lo, now, Coanocotzin cried, thou seest The cities of this widely peopled plain; And wert thou on you farthest temple-

top, 171
Yet as far onward wouldst thou see the land [men.
Well husbanded like this, and full of

They tell me that two floating palaces Brought thee and all thy people; . when I sound

The Tambour of the God, ten Cities hear Its voice, and answer to the call in arms.

In truth I felt my weakness, and the view

Had wakened no unreasonable fear, But that a nearer sight had stirr'd my

blood; 180
For on the summit where we stood four

Were piled with human skulls, and all around

Long files of human heads were strung to parch

And whiten in the sun. What then I

Was more than natural courage..'twas

In more than mortal strength . . a faith in God, . .

Yea, inspiration from Him! . . I exclaim'd,

Not though ten Cities ten times told obev'd

The King of Aztlan's bidding, should I fear 189

The power of man!

Art thou then more than man? He answered; and I saw his tawny cheek

Lose its life-colour as the fear arose; Nor did I undeceive him from that fear, For sooth I knew not how to answer him, And therefore let it work. So not a

Spake he, till we again had reach'd the court,

And I too went in silent thoughtfulness: But then when, save Lincoya, there was none

To hear our speech, again did he renew The query . . Stranger! art thou more than man, 200

That thou shouldst set the power of man at nought?

Then I replied, Two floating palaces Bore me and all my people o'er the seas. When we departed from our motherland, The Moon was newly born; we saw her wax

And wane, and witnessed her new birth again;

And all that while, alike by day and night,

We travell'd through the sea, and caught the winds,

And made them bear us forward. We must meet

In battle, if the Hoamen are not freed

From your accursed tribute, . . thou and I,

My people and thy countless multitudes. Your arrows shall fall from us as the hail

Leaps on a rock, . . and when ye smite with swords,

Not blood but fire shall follow from the stroke.

Yet think not thou that we are more than men!

Our knowledge is our power, and God our strength,

God, whose almighty will created thee, And me, and all that hath the breath of life.

He is our strength; . . for in His name I speak, . . 220

And when I tell thee that thou shalt not shed

The life of man in bloody sacrifice, It is His holy bidding which I speak:

And if thou wilt not listen and obey,

When I shall meet thee in the battle-field,

It is His holy cause for which I fight, And I shall have His power to vanquish thee!

And thinkest thou our Gods are feeble? cried

The King of Aztlan; thinkest thou they lack

Power to defend their altars, and to

The kingdom which they gave us strength to win?

The Gods of thirty nations have opposed Their irresistible might, and they lie now

Conquer'd and caged and fetter'd at their feet.

That we who serve them are no coward Let prove the ample realm we won in

arms:..

And I their leader am not of the sons Of the feeble! As he spake, he reach'd a mace,

The trunk and knotted root of some young tree.

Such as old Albion and his monster-

From the oak-forest for their weapons

pluck'd. When father Brute and Corineus set

foot On the White Island first. Lo this,

auoth he. My club! and he threw back his robe;

and this The arm that wields it! . . 'Twas my

father's once: Erillyab's husband, King Tepollomi,

He felt its weight. . . Did I not show thee him?

He lights me at my evening banquet. There.

In very deed, the dead Tepollomi Stood up against the wall, by devilish

Preserv'd: and from his black and shrivell'd hand

The steady lamp hung down.

My spirit rose At that abomination: I exclaimed Thou art of noble nature, and full fain Would I in friendship plight my hand with thine;

But till that body in the grave be laid, Till thy polluted altars be made pure, There is no peace between us. May my God.

Who, though thou know'st Him not, is also thine.

And after death will be thy dreadful Judge,

May it please Him to visit thee, and shed

His mercy on thy soul. . . But if thy

Be harden'd to the proof, come when thou wilt!

I know thy power, and thou shalt then Than the gay plumage of the mountainknow mine.

VII. THE BATTLE

Now then to meet the war! Erillyab's

Roused all her people to revenge their wrongs:

And at Lincova's voice, the mountain tribes

Arose and broke their bondage. I mean-

Took counsel with Cadwallon and his

And told them of the numbers we must meet.

And what advantage from the mountain-straits

I thought, as in the Saxon wars, to win. Thou saw'st their weapons then, Cadwallon said;

Are they like these rude works of ignorance.

Bone-headed shafts, and spears of wood, and shields.

Strong only for such strife?

We had to cope With wiser enemies, and abler arm'd. What for the sword they wielded was

a staff Set thick with stones athwart; you

would have deem'd The uncouth shape was cumbrous; but

a hand Expert, and practised to its use, could

drive The sharpen'd flints with deadly impulse

Their mail, if mail it may be call'd, was woven

Of vegetable down, like finest flax, 20 Bleach'd to the whiteness of the newfallen snow.

To every bend and motion flexible,

Light as a warrior's summer-garb in peace:

Yet, in that lightest, softest, habergeon, Harmless the sharp stone arrow-head would hang.

Others, of higher office, were array'd

In feathery breast-plates of more gorgeous hue

cock,

Or pheasant's glittering pride. But what were these.

opposed

To arms like ours in battle? What the

Of wood fire-harden'd, or the wooden helm.

Against the iron arrows of the South, Against our northern spears, or battle-

Or good sword, wielded by a British hand?

Then, quoth Cadwallon, at the wooden

Of these weak arms the weakest, let the

Hew, and the spear be thrust. The mountaineers.

So long inured to crouch beneath their voke.

We will not trust in battle; from the heights

They with their arrows may annoy the

And when our closer strife has won the

Then let them loose for havoc.

O my son, Exclaim'd the blind old man, thou counsellest ill!

Blood will have blood, revenge beget revenge,

Evil must come of evil. We shall win, Certes, a cheap and easy victory

In the first field: their arrows from our

Will fall, and on the hauberk and the helm

The flint-edge blunt and break; while through their limbs,

Naked, or vainly fenced, the griding steel Shall sheer its mortal way. But what are we

Against a nation? Other hosts will rise In endless warfare, with perpetual fights Dwindling our all-too-few; or multitudes

Will wear and weary us, till we sink sub-

By the very toil of conquest. Ye are strong:

But he who puts his trust in mortal strength

Or what the thin gold hauberk, when Leans on a broken reed. First prove your power;

Be in the battle terrible, but spare The fallen, and follow not the flying foe:

Then may ye win a nobler victory, So dealing with the captives as to fill Their hearts with wonder, gratitude,

and awe. That love shall mingle with their fear, and fear

'Stablish the love, else wavering. Let them see.

That as more pure and gentle is your faith.

Yourselves are gentler, purer. Ye shall

As gods among them, if ye thus obey God's precepts.

Soon the mountain tribes, in arms Rose at Lincoya's call: a numerous

More than in numbers, in the memory Of long oppression, and revengeful hope, A formidable foe. I station'd them Where at the entrance of the rocky straits.

Secure themselves, their arrows might command

The coming army. On the plain below We took our stand, between the mountain-base

And the green margin of the waters. Soon

Their long array came on. Oh what a pomp

And pride and pageantry of war was there !

Not half so gaudied, for their May-day mirth.

All wreathed and ribanded, our youths and maids.

As these stern Aztecas in war attire! The golden glitterance, and the feathermail.

More gay than glittering gold; and round the helm

A coronal of high upstanding plumes Green as the spring grass in the sunny shower:

Or scarlet bright, as in the wintry wood

The cluster'd holly; or of purple tint,... Whereto shall that be liken'd? to what gem

Indiadem'd, . . what flower, . . what insect's wing?

With war songs and wild music they came on,

We the while kneeling, raised with one accord

The hymn of supplication.

Front to front,
And now the embattled armies stood:
a band

Of priests, all sable-garmented, advanced;

They piled a heap of sedge before our host,

And warn'd us, ... Sons of Ocean! from the land

Of Aztlan, while ye may, depart in peace!

Before the fire shall be extinguish'd, hence!

Or, even as you dry sedge amid the flame,

So ye shall be consumed . . The arid heap

They kindled, and the rapid flame ran

And blazed, and died away. Then from his bow,

With steady hand, their chosen archer loosed

The Arrow of the Omen. To its mark
The shaft of divination fled; it smote
Cadwallon's plated breast; the brittle
point

Rebounded. He, contemptuous of their faith, 110 Stoopt for the shaft, and while with

zealous speed
To the rescue they rushed onward

To the rescue they rushed onward, snapping it

Asunder, toss'd the fragments back in scorn.

Fierce was their onset; never in the field

Encounter'd I with braver enemies.

Nor marvel ye, nor think it to their shame.

If soon they stagger'd, and gave way, and fled,

So many from so few; they saw their darts

Recoil, their lances shiver, and their swords

Fall ineffectual, blunted with the blow. Think ye no shame of Aztlan that they fled.

When the bowmen of Deheubarth plied so well

Their shafts with fatal aim; through the thin gold

Or feather-mail, while Gwyneth's deepdriven spears

Pierced to the bone and vitals; when they saw

The falchion, flashing late so lightninglike,

Quench'd in their own life-blood. Our mountaineers

Shower'd from the heights, meantime, an arrowy storm,

Themselves secure; and we who bore the brunt

Of battle, iron men, impassable, 130 Stood in our strength unbroken. Marvel

If then the brave felt fear, already impress'd

That day by ominous thoughts, to fear akin;

For so it chanced, high Heaven ordaining so,

The King, who should have led his people forth,
At the army-head, as they began their

march,
Was with sore sickness stricken: and

Was with sore sickness stricken; and the stroke

Came like the act and arm of very God, So suddenly, and in that point of time.

A gallant man was he who in his stead

That day commanded Aztlan: his long hair.

Tufted with many a cotton lock, proclaim'd

Of princely prowess many a feat achieved

In many a field of fame. Oft had he led

The Aztecas, with happy fortune, forth; Yet could not now Yuhidthiton inspire

His host with hope: he, not the less, that day,

True to his old renown, and in the hour Of rout and ruin with collected mind, Sounded his signals shrill, and in the voice

Of loud reproach and anger, and brave shame.

Call'd on the people.. But when nought avail'd,

Seizing the standard from the timid hand

Which held it in dismay, alone he turn'd, For honourable death resolved, and praise

That would not die. Thereat the braver chiefs

Rallied, anew their signals rung around, And Aztlan, seeing how we spared her flight,

Took heart, and roll'd the tide of battle back.

But when Cadwallon from the chieftain's grasp 160

Had cut the standard-staff away, and stunn'd

And stretch'd him at his mercy on the field,

Then fled the enemy in utter rout,
Broken and quell'd at heart. One chief

Bestrode the body of Yuhidthiton; Bareheaded did young Malinal bestride His brother's body, wiping from his

With the shield-hand the blinding blood away.

And dealing franticly with broken sword Obstinate wrath, the last resisting foe. Him, in his own despite, we seized and saved.

Then in the moment of our victory, We purified our hands from blood, and knelt,

And pour'd to heaven the grateful prayer of praise

And raised the choral psalm. Triumphant thus

To the hills we went our way; the mountaineers

With joy, and dissonant song, and antic dance:

The captives sullenly, deeming that they went

To meet the certain death of sacrifice, Yet stern and undismay'd. We bade them know 180

Ours was a law of mercy and of love; We heal'd their wounds, and set the prisoners free.

Bear ye, quoth I, my bidding to your King:

Say to him, Did the stranger speak to thee

The words of truth, and hath he proved his power?

Thus saith the Lord of Ocean, in the

Of God, Almighty, Universal God,

Thy Judge and mine, whose battles I have fought,

Whose bidding I obey, whose will I speak;

Shed thou no more in impious sacrifice
The life of man; restore unto the grave
The dead Tepollomi; set this people
free,

And peace shall be between us.

On the morrow Came messengers from Aztlan, in reply. Coanocotzin with sore malady

Hath, by the Gods, been stricken: will the Lord

Of Ocean visit his sick bed?.. He told Of wrath, and as he said, the vengeance came:

Let him bring healing now, and 'stablish peace.

VIII. THE PEACE

Again, and now with better hope, I sought

The city of the King! there went with me

Iolo, old Iolo, he who knows

The virtue of all herbs of mount or vale, Or greenwood shade, or quiet brooklet's bed:

Whatever lore of science, or of song, Sages and Bards of old have handed down.

Aztlan that day pour'd forth her swarming sons,

To wait my coming. To stay the hand of anger? was the

The general cry, . . and will he save the King?

Coanocotzin too had nurst that thought, And the strong hope upheld him; he put forth

His hand, and raised a quick and anxious

Is it not peace and mercy?.. thou art

To pardon and to save!

I answer'd him. That power, O King of Aztlan, is not mine!

Such help as human cunning can bestow, Such human help I bring; but health and life

Are in the hand of God, who at his will Gives or withdraws; and what he wills is best.

Then old Iolo took his arm, and felt The symptom, and he bade him have good hope,

For life was strong within him. So it proved:

The drugs of subtle virtue did their work;

They quell'd the venom of the malady. And from the frame expell'd it, . . that a sleep

Fell on the King, a sweet and natural sleep,

And from its healing he awoke refresh'd Though weak, and joyful as a man who felt

The peril pass'd away.

Ere long we spake Of concord, and how best to knit the bonds

Of lasting friendship. When we won this land,

Coanocotzin said, these fertile vales Were not, as now, with fruitful groves embower'd,

Nor rich with towns and populous villages.

Abounding, as thou seest, with life and

Our fathers found bleak heath, and Awe them, for they awe me. So we desert moor,

Will he ask his Wild woodland, and savannahs wide and waste,

> Rude country of rude dwellers. our arms

They to the mountain fastnesses retired. And long with obstinate and harassing

Provoked us, hoping not for victory. Yet mad for vengeance; till Tepollomi

Fell by my father's hand; and with their King,

The strength and flower of all their youth cut off,

All in one desolating day, they took The voke upon their necks. What

wouldest thou That to these Hoamen I should now concede?

Lord of the Ocean, speak!

Let them be free! 50 Quoth I. I come not from my native isle

To wage the war of conquest, and cast

Your people from the land which time and toil

Have rightly made their own. The land is wide;

There is enough for all. So they be freed From that accursed tribute, and ye shed The life of man no more in sacrifice,

In the most holy name of God I say, Let there be peace between us!

Thou hast won Their liberty, the King replied: henceforth.

Free as they are, if they provoke the war, Reluctantly will Aztlan raise her arm. Be thou the peace-preserver. To what else

Thou say'st, instructed by calamity, I lend a humble ear; but to destroy

The worship of my fathers, or abate Or change one point, lies not within the

reach And scope of kingly power. Speak thou hereon

With those whom we hold holy, with the sons

Of the Temple, they who commune with the Gods;

resolved

That when the bones of King Tepollomi Had had their funeral honours, they and I

Should by the green-lake side, before the King,

And in the presence of the people, hold A solemn talk.

Then to the mountain-huts,
The bearer of good tidings, I return'd,
Leading the honourable train who bore
The relics of the King; not parch'd and
black,

As I had seen the unnatural corpse stand up, 80

In ghastly mockery of the attitude And act of life, . . his bones had now been blanch'd

With decent reverence. Soon the mountaineers

Saw the white deer-skin shroud; the rumour spread;

They gather'd round, and follow'd in our train.

Before Erillyab's hut the bearers laid Their burden down. She, calm of countenance,

And with dry eye, albeit her hand the while

Shook like an agueish limb, unroll'd the shroud.

The multitude stood gazing silently, 90 The young and old alike all awed and hush'd

Under the holy feeling, . . and the

Was aweful; that huge multitude so still,

That we could hear distinct the mountain-stream

Roll down its rocky channel far away.

And this was all; sole ceremony this,

The sight of death and silence, . . till at
length,

In the ready grave his bones were laid to rest.

'Twas in her hut and home, yea, underneath

The marriage bed, the bed of widow-hood, 100

Her husband's grave was dug; on softest fur

The bones were laid, with fur were covered o'er,

Then heap'd with bark and boughs, and, last of all,

Earth was to earth trod down.

And now the day Appointed for our talk of peace was come.

On the green margin of the lake we met, Elders, and Priests, and Chiefs; the multitude

Around the Circle of the Council stood. Then, in the midst, Coanocotzin rose,

And thus the King began: Pabas and Chiefs 110

Of Aztlan, hither ye are come to learn The law of peace. The Lord of Ocean saith,

The Tribes whom he hath gathered underneath

The wings of his protection, shall be free;

And in the name of his great God he saith,

That ye shall never shed in sacrifice
The blood of man. Are ye content?

We may together here, in happy hour, Bury the sword.

Hereat a Paba rose, And answer'd for his brethren: . . He hath won

The Hoamen's freedom, that their blood

Shall on our altars flow; for this the Lord

Of Ocean fought, and Aztlan yielded it In battle. But if we forego the rites Of our forefathers, if we wrong the Gods, Who give us timely sun and timely showers,

Their wrath will be upon us; they will

Their ears to prayer, and turn away the eyes

Which watch for our well-doing, and withhold 129

The hands dispensing our prosperity.

Cynetha then arose, between his son And me supported, rose the blind old man.

Ye wrong us, men of Aztlan, if ye deem We bid ye wrong the Gods; accurst were he Who would obey such bidding, . . more accurst

The wretch who should enjoin impiety. It is the will of God which we make

Your God and ours. Know ye not Him who laid

The deep foundations of the earth, and built

The arch of heaven, and kindled yonder sun,

And breathed into the woods and waves and sky

The power of life?

We know Him, they replied, The great For-Ever One, the God of Gods.

Ipalnemoani, He by whom we live! And we too, quoth Ayayaca, we know And worship the Great Spirit, who in clouds

And storms, in mountain caves, and by the fall

Of waters, in the woodland solitude,

And in the night and silence of the sky,
Doth make his being felt. We also
know.

And fear, and worship the Beloved One.

Our God, replied Cynetha, is the same, The Universal Father. He to the first Made his will known; but when men multiplied,

The Evil Spirits darken'd them, and sin And misery came into the world, and

Forsook the way of truth, and gave to stocks

And stones the incommunicable name. Yet with one chosen, one peculiar Race, The knowledge of their Father and their God

Remain'd, from sire to son transmitted down.

While the bewilder'd Nations of the earth

Wander'd in fogs, and were in darkness lost,

The light abode with them; and when at times

They sinn'd and went astray, the Lord hath put

A voice into the mouths of holy men,

Raising up witnesses unto himself, That so the saving knowledge of his name

Might never fail; nor the glad promise, given

To our first parent, that at length his sons,

From error, sin, and wretchedness redeem'd,

Should form one happy family of love. Nor ever hath that light, howe'er bedimm'd,

Wholly been quench'd; still in the heart of man

A feeling and an instinct it exists,

His very nature's stamp and privilege, Yea, of his life the life. I tell ye not, O Aztecas! of things unknown before;

I do but waken up a living sense

That sleeps within ye! Do ye love the Gods 180

Who call for blood? Doth the poor sacrifice

Go with a willing step, to lay his life
Upon their altars?.. Good must come
of good,

Evil of evil; if the fruit be death,

The poison springeth from the sap and root,

And the whole tree is deadly; if the rites Be evil, they who claim them are not good,

Not to be worshipp'd then; for to obey The evil will is evil. Aztecas!

From the For-Ever, the Beloved One, The Universal Only God I speak, 191 Your God and mine, our Father and our Judge.

Hear ye his law, . . hear ye the perfect

Of love, 'Do ye to others, as ye would That they should do to you!' He bids us meet

To praise his name, in thankfulness and joy:

He bids us, in our sorrow, pray to him, The Comforter. Love him, for he is good!

Fear him, for he is just! Obey his will, For who can bear his anger!

While he spake,
They stood with open mouth, and
motionless sight,
201

Watching his countenance, as though To more attentive silence hush'd the the voice

Were of a God; for sure it seem'd that

Than inspiration could not have infused That eloquent passion in a blind man's

And when he ceased, all eyes at once were turn'd

Upon the Pabas, waiting their reply, If that to that acknowledged argument Reply could be devised. But they themselves.

Stricken by the truth, were silent; and they look'd

Toward their chief and mouth-piece, the High Priest

Tezozomoc; he too was pale and mute, And when he gather'd up his strength to speak,

Speech fail'd him, his lip falter'd, and his eye

Fell utterly abash'd, and put to shame. But in the Chiefs, and in the multitude, And in the King of Aztlan, better thoughts

Were working; for the Spirit of the Lord That day was moving in the heart of

Coanocotzin rose: Pabas, and Chiefs, And men of Aztlan, ye have heard a talk Of peace and love, and there is no reply. Are ye content with what the Wise Man saith ?

And will ye worship God in that good

Which God himself ordains? If it be so. Together here will we in happy hour Bury the sword.

Tezozomoc replied, This thing is new, and in the land till

Unheard: .. what marvel, therefore, if No ready answer? Let our Lord the

King

Do that which seemeth best. Yuhidthiton.

Chief of the Chiefs of Aztlan, next arose. Of all her numerous sons, could Aztlan boast

No mightier arm in battle, nor whose voice

Of council. When the Wise Man spake, quoth he,

I ask'd of mine own heart if it were so, And, as he said, the living instinct there Answer'd, and own'd the truth. In happy hour,

O King of Aztlan, did the Ocean Lord Through the great waters hither wend his way:

For sure he is the friend of God and man.

With that an uproar of assent arose From the whole people, a tumultuous shout

Of universal joy and glad acclaim.

But when Coanocotzin raised his hand, That he might speak, the clamour and the buz

Ceased, and the multitude, in tiptoo hope,

Attent and still, await the final voice. Then said the Sovereign, Hear, O Az-

Your own united will! From this day forth

No life upon the altar shall be shed,

No blood shall flow in sacrifice; the rites Shall all be pure, such as the blind Old Man,

Whom God hath taught, will teach. This ye have will'd :

And therefore it shall be!

The King hath said! Like thunder the collected voice replied: Let it be so!

Lord of the Ocean, then Pursued the King of Aztlan, we will now Lay the war-weapon in the grave, and ioin 260

right-hand friendship. By our In custom, blood

Should sanctify and bind the solemn act; But by what oath and ceremony thou Shalt proffer, by the same will Aztlan swear.

Nor oath, nor ceremony, I replied,

() King, is needful. To his own good word

The good and honourable man will act, Oaths will not curb the wicked. Here we stand

In the broad day-light; the For-Ever One,

The Every-Where beholds us. In his sight 270

We join our hands in peace: if e'er again Should these right hands be raised in enmity.

Upon the offender will his judgement fall.

The grave was dug; Coanocotzin laid His weapon in the earth; Erillyab's son, Young Amalahta, for the Hoamen, laid His hatchet there; and there I laid the sword.

Here let me end. What follow'd was

Of peace, no theme for story; how we fix'd

Our sojourn in the hills, and sow'd our fields, 280

And, day by day, saw all things prospering. [nounce

Thence have I come, Goervyl, to an-The tidings of my happy enterprize; There I return, to take thee to our home.

I love my native land; with as true love As ever yet did warm a British heart,

Love I the green fields of the beautiful Isle,

My father's heritage! But far away, Where nature's booner hand has blest the earth,

My lot hath been assign'd; beyond the seas 290

Madoe hath found his home; beyond the seas

A country for his children hath he chosen, [peace.

A land wherein their portion may be

IX. EMMA

Bur while Aberfraw echoed to the sounds

Of merriment and music, Madoc's heart Mourn'd for his brethren. Therefore, when no ear

Was nigh, he sought the King, and said to him,

To-morrow, for Mathraval I set forth; Longer I must not linger here, to pass The easy hours in feast and revelry, Forgetful of my people far away. I go to tell the tidings of success,

And seek new comrades. What if it should chance 10

That, for this enterprize, our brethren, Foregoing all their hopes and fortunes here,

Would join my banner?.. Let me send abroad

Their summons, O my brother! so secure.

You may forgive the past, and once again Will peace and concord bless our father's house.

Hereafter will be time enow for this, The King replied; thy easy nature sees not.

How, if the traitors for thy banner send Their bidding round, in open war against

Their own would soon be spread. charge thee, Madoc,

Neither to see nor aid these fugitives, The shame of Owen's blood.

Sullen he spake, And turn'd away; nor farther commune

now
Did Madoe seek, nor had he more endured:

For bitter thoughts were rising in his heart,

And anguish, kindling anger. In such mood

He to his sister's chamber took his way. She sate with Emma, with the gentle Queen;

For Emma had already learnt to love The gentle maid. Goervyl saw what thoughts

Troubled her brother's brow. Madoc, she cried,

Thou hast been with the King, been rashly pleading

For Ririd and for Rodri!.. He replied, I did but ask him little,.. did but say, Belike our brethren would go forth with

To voluntary exile; then, methought, His fear and jealousy might well have ceased.

And all be safe.

And did the King refuse?

Quoth Emma: I will plead for them,
quoth she,

40

With dutiful warmth and zeal will plead for them:

And surely David will not say me nay.

O sister! cried Goervyl, tempt him not!

Sister, you know him not! Alas, to touch

That perilous theme is, even in Madoo here,

A perilous folly. . . Sister, tempt him not!

You do not know the King!

But then a fear Fled to the cheek of Emma, and her eye, Quickening with wonder, turn'd toward the Prince,

As if expecting that his manly mind 50 Would mould Goervyl's meaning to a shape

Less fearful, would interpret and amend The words she hoped she did not hear aright.

Emma was young; she was a sacrifice To that cold king-craft, which, in marriage-vows

Linking two hearts, unknowing each of each,

Perverts the ordinance of God, and makes

The holiest tie a mockery and a curse. Her eye was patient, and she spake in tones

So sweet and of so pensive gentleness, That the heart felt them. Madoc! she exclaimed, 61

Why dost thou hate the Saxons? O my brother,

If I have heard aright, the hour will come

When the Plantagenet shall wish herself Among her nobler, happier countrymen, From these unnatural enmities escaped, And from the vengeance they must call from Heaven!

Shame then suffused the Prince's countenance,

Mindful how, drunk in anger, he had given

His hatred loose. My sister Queen, quoth he, 70

Marvel not you that with my mother's milk

I suck'd that hatred in. Have they not

The scourge and the devouring sword of God.

The curse and pestilence which he hath sent

To root us from the land? Alas, our crimes

Have drawn this dolorous visitation down!

Our sun hath long been westering; and the night

And darkness and extinction are at hand.

We are a fallen people!.. From ourselves

The desolation and the ruin come; 80 In our own vitals doth the poison work..

The House that is divided in itself,

How should it stand?.. A blessing on you, Lady!

But in this wretched family the strife Is rooted all too deep; it is an old

And cankered wound, . . an cating, killing sore,

For which there is no healing. . . If the King

Should ever speak his fears, . . and sure to you

All his most inward thoughts he will make known, . .

Counsel him then to let his brethren share

My enterprize, to send them forth with me

To everlasting exile... She hath told you Too hardly of the King; I know him well:

He hath a stormy nature; and what germs

Of virtue would have budded in his heart,

Cold winds have check'd, and blighting seasons nipt.

Yet in his heart they live. . . A blessing on you,

That you may see their blossom and their fruit!

X. MATHRAVAL

Now for Mathraval went Prince Madoc forth:

O'er Menai's ebbing tide, up mountainpaths,

Beside grey mountain-stream, and lonely lake,

And through old Snowdon's forestsolitude,

He held right on his solitary way.

Nor paused he in that rocky vale, where oft

Up the familiar path, with gladder pace, His steed had hastened to the wellknown door, . .

That valley, o'er whose crags, and sprinkled trees,

And winding stream, so oft his eye had loved 10

To linger, gazing, as the eve grew dim, From Dolwyddelan's Tower; . . alas! from thence

As from his brother's monument, he turn'd

A loathing eye, and through the rocky vale

Sped on. From morn till noon, from noon till eve,

He travelled on his way: and when at morn

Again the Ocean Chief bestrode his steed,

The heights of Snowdon on his backward glance

Hung like a cloud in heaven. O'er heath and hill

And barren height he rode; and darker now,

In loftier majesty thy mountain-seat, Star-loving Idris, rose. Nor turn'd he now

Beside Kregennan, where his infant feet Had trod Ednywain's hall; nor loitered he

In the green vales of Powys, till he

Where Warnway rolls its waters underneath

Ancient Mathraval's venerable walls, Cyveilioc's princely and paternal seat.

But Madoc sprung not forward now to greet

The chief he loved, for from Cyveilioc's hall

The voice of harp and song commingled came;

It was that day the feast of victory there:

Around the Chieftain's board the warriors sate;

The sword and shield and helmet, on the wall

And round the pillars, were in peace hung up;

And, as the flashes of the central fire At fits arose, a dance of wavy light

Play'd o'er the reddening steel. The Chiefs, who late

So well had wielded in the work of war Those weapons, sate around the board, to quaff

The beverage of the brave, and hear their fame.

Mathraval's Lord, the Poet and the Prince,

Cyveilioc stood before them, . . in his pride:

His hands were on the harp, his eyes were closed.

His head, as if in reverence to receive The inspiration, bent; anon, he raised His glowing countenance and brighter eye.

And swept with passionate hand the ringing harp.

Fill high the Hirlas Horn! to Grufydd bear

Its frothy beverage. . . from his crimson lance 50

The invader fled; . . fill high the gold-tipt Horn!

Heard ye in Maelor the step of war... The hastening shout.. the onset?..

Did ye hear The clash and clang of arms . . the battle-

Loud as the roar of Ocean, when the

At midnight are abroad?.. the yell of wounds..

The rage.. the agony?.. Give to him the Horn

Whose spear was broken, and whose buckler pierced

With many a shaft, yet not the less he fought

And conquered; . . therefore let Ednyved share 60

The generous draught, give him the long blue Horn!

Pour out again, and fill again the spoil Of the wild bull, with silver wrought of yore:

And bear the golden lip to Tudyr's hand, Eagle of battle! For Moreiddig fill

The honourable Hirlas! . . Where are They?

Where are the noble Brethren? Wolves of war,

They kept their border well, they did their part,

Their fame is full, their lot is praise and

A mournful song to me, a song of wee!.. Brave Brethren! for their honour brim the cup,

Which they shall quaff no more.

We drove away The strangers from our land; profuse of life.

Our warriors rush'd to battle, and the

Saw from his noontide fields their manly strife.

Pour thou the flowing mead! Cupbearer, fill

The Hirlas! for hadst thou beheld the day

Of Llidom, thou hadst known how well the Chiefs

Deserve this honour now. Cyveilioc's shield

Were they in danger, when the Invader came;

Be praise and liberty their lot on earth, And joy be theirs in heaven!

Here ceased the song; Then from the threshold on the rushstrewn floor

Madoc advanced. Cyveilioc's eye was now

To present forms awake, but even as

He felt his harp-chords throb with dying sounds,

The heat and stir and passion had not yet

Subsided in his soul. Again he struck
The loud-toned harp. . . Pour from the
silver vase.

And brim the honourable Horn, and bear 90
The draught of joy to Madoc, . . he who

first

Explored the desert ways of Ocean, first Through the wide waste of sea and sky, held on

Undaunted, till upon another World, The Lord and Conqueror of the Elements, He set his foot triumphant? Fill for

The Hirlas! fill the honourable Horn! This for Mathraval is a happy hour,

When Madoc, her hereditary guest,
Appears within her honour'd walls
again, 100

Madoc, the British Prince, the Ocean Lord,

Who never for injustice rear'd his arm; Whose presence fills the heart of every

With fear, the heart of every friend with joy;

Give him the Hirlas Horn, fill, till the draught

Of joy shall quiver o'er the golden brim! In happy hour the hero hath return'd! In happy hour the friend, the brother treads

Cyveilioc's floor!

He sprung to greet his guest; The cordial grasp of fellowship was given;

So in Mathraval there was double joy On that illustrious day; they gave their guest

The seat of honour, and they fill'd for him

The Hirlas Horn. Cyveilioc and his Chiefs,

All eagerly, with wonder-waiting eyes, Look to the Wanderer of the Water's tale.

Nor mean the joy which kindled Madoc's brow,

When as he told of daring enterprize Crown'd with deserved success. Intent they heard ()f all the blessings of that happier clime;

And when the adventurer spake of soon return,

Each on the other gazed, as if to say, Methinks it were a goodly lot to dwell In that fair land in peace.

Then said the Prince
Of Powys, Madoc, at an happy time
Thou hast toward Mathraval bent thy
way:

For on the morrow, in the eye of light, Our bards will hold their congress. Seekest thou

Comrades to share success? proclaim abroad

Thine invitation there, and it will spread

Far as our fathers' ancient tongue is known.

Thus at Mathraval went the Hirlas round;

A happy day was that! Of other years

They talk'd, of common toils, and fields of war

Where they fought side by side; of Corwen's scene

Of glory, and of comrades now no more:..

Themes of delight, and grief which brought its joy.

Thus they beguiled the pleasant hours, while night

Waned fast away; then late they laid them down,

Each on his bed of rushes, stretch'd around 140

The central fire.

The Sun was newly risen When Madoc join'd his host, no longer now

Clad as the conquering chief of Maelor, In princely arms, but in his nobler robe,

The sky-blue mantle of the Bard, arrayed.

So for the place of meeting they set forth;

And now they reach'd Melangell's lonely church.

Amid a grove of evergreens it stood,

A garden and a grove, where every grave

Was deck'd with flowers, or with unfading plants

O'ergrown, sad rue, and funeral rosemary.

Here Madoc paused. The morn is young, quoth he,

A little while to old remembrance given Will not belate us. . . Many a year hath fled.

Cyveilioc, since you led me here, and told

The legend of the Saint. Come!..be not loth!

We will not loiter long. . . So soon to mount

The bark, which will for ever bear me hence,

I would not willingly pass by one spot Which thus recalls the thought of other times, 160

Without a pilgrim's visit.

Thus he spake, And drew Cyveilioc through the churchyard porch,

To the rude image of Saint Monacel.

Dost thou remember, Owen, said the Prince,

When first I was thy guest in early youth,

That once, as we had wandered here at eve,

You told, how here a poor and hunted hare

Ran to the Virgin's feet, and look'd to

For life?.. I thought, when listening to the tale,

She had a merciful heart, and that her face 170

Must with a saintly gentleness have beam'd.

When beasts could read its virtue. Here we sate

Upon the jutting root of this old yeugh...

Dear friend! so pleasant didst thou make those days.

That in my heart, long as my heart shall

Minutest recollections still will live, Still be the source of joy. As Madoc spake,

His glancing eye fell on a monument, Around whose base the rosemary droop'd down,

As yet not rooted well. Sculptured above, 180

A warrior lay; the shield was on his arm;

Madoc approach'd, and saw the blazonry, . .

A sudden chill ran through him, as he read,

Here Yorwerth lies, . . it was his brother's grave.

Cyveilioc took him by the hand: For this.

Madoc, was I so loth to enter here! He sought the sanctuary, but close upon him

The murderers follow'd, and by yonder copse

The stroke of death was given. All I could

Was done; . . I saw him here consign'd to rest,

Daily due masses for his soul are sung, And duly hath his grave been deck'd with flowers.

So saying, from the place of death he led

The silent Prince. But lately, he pursued.

Llewelyn was my guest, thy favourite boy.

For thy sake and his own, it was my

That at Mathraval he would make his home:

He had not needed then a father's love. But he, I know not on what enterprize, Was brooding ever; and those secret thoughts

Drew him away. God prosper the brave boy!

It were a happy day for this poor land If e'er Llewelyn mount his rightful throne.

XI. THE GORSEDD

THE place of meeting was a high hill-top,

Nor bower'd with trees nor broken by the plough,

Remote from human dwellings and the stir

Of human life, and open to the breath And to the eye of Heaven. In days of old,

There had the circling stones been planted; there,

From earliest ages, the primeval lore,

Through Bard to Bard with reverence handed down:

They whom to wonder, or the love of song,

Or reverence of their fathers' ancient rites

Drew thither, stood without the ring of stones.

Cyveilioc entered to the initiate Bards, Himself, albeit his hands were stain'd with war,

Initiate; for the Order, in the lapse Of years and in their nation's long decline

From the first rigour of their purity Somewhat had fallen. The Masters of the Song

Were clad in azure robes, for in that hue Deduced from Heaven, which o'er a sinful world

Spreads its eternal canopy serene, 20 Meet emblem did the ancient Sages see Of unity and peace and spotless truth.

Within the stones of Federation there, On the green turf, and under the blue sky,

A noble band, the Bards of Britain stood,

Their heads in reverence bare, and bare of foot.

A deathless brotherhood! Cyveilioc

Lord of the Hirlas; Llyware there was

And old Cynddelow, to whose lofty song, So many a time amid his father's court Resigning up his soul, had Madoc given The flow of feeling loose. But Madoc's heart 32
Was full; old feelings and remem-

brances.

And thoughts from which was no escape, arose:

He was not there to whose sweet lay, so oft,

With all a brother's fond delight, he lov'd

To listen, . . Hoel was not there! . . the hand

That once so well, amid the triple chords, Moved in the rapid maze of harmony,

It had no motion now; the lips were dumb

Which knew all tones of passion; and that heart,

That warm ebullient heart, was cold and still

Uponits bed of clay. He look'd around, And there was no familiar countenance, None but Cynddelow's face, which he had learnt

In childhood, and old age had set its mark.

Making unsightly alteration there.

Another generation had sprung up, And made him feel how fast the days of

Flow by, how soon their number is told out. 50

He knew not then that Llywarc's lay should give

His future fame; his spirit on the past Brooding, beheld with no forefeeling joy The rising sons of song, who there essay'd

Their eaglet flight. But there among the youth

In the green vesture of their earliest rank,

Or with the aspirants clad in motley garb,

Young Benvras stood; and, one whose favoured race

Heaven with the hereditary power had blest.

The old Gowalchmai's not degenerate child:

And there another Einion; gifted youths,

And heirs of immortality on earth,

Whose after-strains, through many a distant age

Cambria shall boast, and love the songs that tell

The fame of Owen's house.

There, in the eye
Of light and in the face of day, the rites
Began. Upon the stone of Covenant

First the sheathed sword was laid; the Master then

Upraised his voice, and cried, Let them who seek

The high degree and sacred privilege 70 Of Bardic science, and of Cimbric lore, Here to the Bards of Britain make their

claim!
Thus having said, the Master bade the youths

Approach the place of peace, and merit

The Bard's most honourable name.
With that.

Heirs and transmittors of the ancient light.

The youths advanced; they heard the Cimbric lore.

From earliest days preserved; they struck their harps,

And each in due succession raised the song.

Last of the aspirants, as of greener years, 80

Young Caradoc advanced; his lip as yet Scarce darken'd with its down, his flaxen locks

Wreathed in contracting ringlets waving low;

Bright were his large blue eyes, and kindled now

With that same passion that inflamed his cheek;

Yet in his cheek there was the sickliness Which thought and feeling leave, wearing away

The hue of youth. Inclining on his harp,

He, while his comrades in probation song Approved their claim, stood hearkening as it seem'd.

And yet like unintelligible sounds
He heard the symphony and voice
attuned:

Even in such feelings as, all undefined, Come with the flow of waters to the soul,

Or with the motions of the moonlight sky.

But when his bidding came, he at the call Arising from that dreamy mood, ad-

Arising from that dreamy mood, advanced,

Threw back his mantle, and began the lay.

Where are the sons of Gavran? where his tribe

The faithful? following their beloved chief, 100

They the Green Islands of the Ocean sought;

Nor human tongue hath told, nor human ear,

Since from the silver shores they went their way,

Hath heard their fortunes. In his crystal Ark,

Whither sail'd Merlin with his band of Bards,

Old Merlin, master of the mystic lore? Belike his crystal Ark, instinct with life,

Obedient to the mighty Master, reach'd The Land of the Departed; there, belike

They in the clime of immortality, 110
Themselves immortal, drink the gales of bliss.

Which o'er Flathinnis breathe eternal spring,

Blending whatever odours make the gale Of evening sweet, whatever melody Charms the wood-traveller. In their

high roof'd halls
There, with the Chiefs of other days, feel

The mingled joy pervade them?..Or beneath

The mid-sea waters, did that crystal Ark

Down to the secret depths of Ocean plunge

Its fated crew? Dwell they in coral bowers 120
With Mermaid loves, teaching their

vith Mermaid loves, teaching thei paramours

The songs that stir the sea, or make the winds

Hush, and the waves be still? In fields of joy

Have they their home, where central fires maintain

Perpetual summer, and an emerald light

Pervades the green translucent element?

Twice have the sons of Britain left her shores.

As the fledged eaglets quit their native nest;

Twice over ocean have her fearless sons For ever sail'd away. Again they

launch 130
Their vessels to the deep... Who mounts the bark?

The son of Owen, the beloved Prince,

Who never for injustice rear'd his arm.
Respect his enterprize, ye Ocean
Wayes!

Ye Winds of Heaven, waft Madoc on his way!

The Waves of Ocean, and the Winds of

Heaven,
Became his ministers, and Madoc found
The world he sought.

Who seeks the better land? Who mounts the vessel for a world of peace?

He who hath felt the throb of pride, to hear 140 Our old illustrious annals; who was

Our old illustrious annals; who was taught

To lisp the fame of Arthur, to revere Great Caratach's unconquer'd soul, and call

That gallant chief his countryman, who led

The wrath of Britain from her chalky shores

To drive the Roman robber. He who loves

His country, and who feels his country's shame;

Whose bones amid a land of servitude Could never rest in peace; who if he saw

He mounts the bark, to seek for liberty.

Who seeks the better land? The wretched one

Whose joys are blasted all, whose heart is sick.

Who hath no hope, to whom all change is gain,

To whom remember'd pleasures strike a pang

That only guilt should know, . . he mounts the bark.

The Bard will mount the bark of banishment;

The harp of Cambria shall in other lands

Remind the Cambrian of his father's fame:..

The Bard will seek the land of liberty, The world of peace. . . O Prince, receive the Bard!

He ceased the song. His cheek, now fever-flush'd,

Was turn'd to Madoc, and his asking eye

Linger'd on him in hope: nor linger'd long

The look expectant; forward sprung the Prince,

And gave to Caradoc the right-hand pledge,

And for the comrade of his enterprize, With foyful welcome, hail'd the joyful Bard.

Nor needed now the Searcher of the Sea

Announce his enterprize, by Caradoc In song announced so well; from man to man 171

The busy murmur spread, while from the Stone

Of Covenant the sword was taken up, And from the Circle of the Ceremony The Bards went forth, their meeting now fulfill'd.

The multitude, unheeding all beside, Of Madoc and his noble enterprize Held stirring converse on their home-

ward way,
And spread abroad the tidings of a

Where Plenty dwelt with Liberty and Peace. 180

XII. DINEVAWR

So in the court of Powys pleasantly, With hawk and hound afield, and harp in hall,

The days went by; till Madoc, for his heart

Was with Cadwallon, and in early spring Must he set forth to join him over-sea, Took his constrain'd farewell. To Dineyawr

He bent his way, whence many a time with Rhys

Had he gone forth to smite the Saxon foe.

The son of Owen greets his father's friend

With reverential joy; nor did the Lord
Of Dinevawr with cold or deaden'd
heart

Welcome the Prince he loved; though not with joy

Unmingled now, nor the proud consciousness

Which in the man of tried and approved worth

Could bid an equal hail. Henry had

The Lord of Dinevawr between his knees Vow homage; yea, the Lord of Dine-

Had knelt in homage to that Saxon king, Who set a price upon his father's head, That Saxon, on whose soul his mother's blood

Cried out for vengeance. Madoc saw the shame

Which Rhys would fain have hidden, and, in grief

For the degenerate land, rejoiced at heart

That now another country was his home.

Musing on thoughts like these, did Madoc roam

Alone along the Towy's winding shore.

The beavers in its bank had hollow'd out

Their social place of dwelling, and had damm'd

The summer-current with their perfect

Of instinct, erring not in means nor end. But as the floods of spring had broken down 31

Their barrier, so its breaches unrepair'd Were left; and round the piles, which, deeper driven,

Still held their place, the eddying waters whirl'd.

Now in those habitations desolate One sole survivor dwelt: him Madoc

Labouring alone, beside his hermit house;

And in that mood of melancholy thought, . .

For in his boyhood he had loved to watch

Their social work, and for he knew that man 40

In bloody sport had well-nigh rooted out The poor community, . . the ominous sight

Became a grief and burthen. Eve came

The dry leaves rustled to the wind, and fell

And floated on the stream; there was no voice

Save of the mournful rooks, who overhead

Wing'd their long line; for fragrance of sweet flowers,

Only the odour of the autumnal leaves: . .

All sights and sounds of sadness. . . And the place

Among the hills of Gwyneth and its wilds

And mountain glens, perforce he cherish'd still

The hope of mountain liberty; they braced

And knit the heart and arm of hardihood;...

But here, in these green meads, by these low slopes

And hanging groves, attemper'd to the scene,

His spirit yielded. As he loiter'd on, There came toward him one in peasant garb, And call'd his name; ... he started at the sound,

For he had heeded not the man's approach; 60

And now that sudden and familiar voice Came on him, like a vision. So he stood Gazing, and knew him not in the dim light,

Till he again cried, Madoc!.. then he woke.

And knew the voice of Ririd, and sprang on.

And fell upon his neck, and wept for joy And sorrow.

O my brother! Ririd cried, Long, very long it is since I have heard The voice of kindness!.. Let me go with thee!

I am a wanderer in my father's land, . . Hoel he kill'd, and Yorwerth hath he slain;

Llewelyn hath not where to hide his head

In his own kingdom; Rodri is in chains;...

Let me go with thee, Madoc, to some land
Where I may look upon the sun, nor

dread
The light that may betray me; where

at night
I may not, like a hunted beast, rouse up,

I may not, like a hunted beast, rouse up, If the leaves rustle over me.

Of Ocean struggled with his swelling heart.

Let me go with thee?.. but thou didst not doubt

Thy brother?.. Let thee go?.. with what a joy.

Ririd, would I collect the remnant left,... The wretched remnant now of Owen's house,

And mount the bark of willing banishment,

And leave the tyrant to his Saxon friends,

And to his Saxon yoke!.. I urged him thus.

Curb'd down my angry spirit, and besought

Only that I might bid our brethren come.

And share my exile; .. and he spurn'd Returning to the hall. my prayer! . .

Thou hast a gentle pleader at his court: She may prevail; till then abide thou here:..

But not in this, the garb of fear and guilt.

Come thou to Dinevawr, . . assume thyself;.

The good old Rhys will bid thee welcome there.

And the great Palace, like a sanctuary, Is safe. If then Queen Emma's plea should fail.

My timely bidding hence shall summon

When I shall spread the sail. . . Nay, hast thou learnt

Suspicion? . . Rhys is noble, and no deed

Of treachery ever sullied his fair fame!

Madoc then led his brother to the hall Of Rhys. I bring to thee a supplicant, O King, he cried; thou wert my father's friend!

And till our barks be ready in the spring,

I know that here the persecuted son Of Owen will be safe.

A welcome guest! The old warrior cried; by his good father's soul.

He is a welcome guest at Dinevawr! And rising as he spake, he pledged his

In hospitality. . . How now! quoth he, This raiment ill beseems the princely

Of Owen!.. Ririd at his words was led Apart; they wash'd his feet, they gave to him

Fine linen as beseem'd his royal race, The tunic of soft texture woven well, The broider'd girdle, the broad mantle edged

With fur, and flowing low, the bonnet

Form'd of some forest martin's costly .sliogs

The Lord of Dinevawr sat at the dice With Madoc, when he saw him thus array'd,

Ay! this is well i

The noble Chief exclaim'd: 'tis as of vore.

When in Aberfraw, at his father's board.

We sat together, after we had won

Peace and rejoicing with our own right hands.

By Corwen, where, commixt with Saxon blood.

Along its rocky channel the dark Dee Roll'd darker waters. . . Would that all his house

Had, in their day of trouble, thought of

And honour'd me like this! David respects Deheubarth's strength, nor would re-

spect it less,

When such protection leagued its cause with Heaven.

I had forgot his messenger! quoth he, Arising from the dice. Go, bid him here!

He came this morning at an ill-starr'd hour.

To Madoc he pursued; my lazy grooms Had let the hounds play havoc in my

And my old blood was chafed. I'faith, the King

Hath chosen well his messenger: . . he sa.w

That in such mood, I might have render'd him

A hot and hasty answer, and hath waited.

Perhaps to David's service and to mine,

My better leisure.

Now the Messenger Enter'd the hall; Goagan of Powysland.

He of Caer-Einion was it, who was charged

From Gwyneth to Deheubarth; a brave

Of copious speech. He told the royal son Of Gryffidd, the descendant of the line Rhys-ab-Tudyr mawr, that he Of came there 149

From David, son of Owen, of the stock Of kingly Cynan. I am sent, said he, With friendly greeting; and as I receive Welcome and honour, so, in David's name,

Am I to thank the Lord of Dinevawr.

Tell on! quoth Rhys, the purport and the cause Of this appeal?

Of late, some fugitives

Came from the South to Mona, whom the King

Received with generous welcome. Some there were

Who blamed his royal goodness; for they said,

These were the subjects of a rival Prince, 160

Who, peradventure, would with no such bounty

Cherish a northern suppliant. This they urged,

I know not if from memory of old feuds, Better forgotten, or in envy. Moved Hereby, King David swore he would not

Till he had put the question to the proof,

Whether with liberal honour the Lord Rhys

Would greet his messenger; but none was found

Of all who had instill d that evil doubt, Ready to bear the embassy: I heard it, And did my person tender, . . for I knew

The nature of Lord Rhys of Dinevawr.

Well! quoth the Chief, Goagan of Powys-land,

This honourable welcome that thou seekest

Wherein may it consist?

In giving me, Goagan of Powys-land replied, a horse Better than mine, to bear me home; a suit

Of seemly raiment, and ten marks in coin,

With raiment and two marks for him who leads

My horse's bridle.

For his sake, said Rhys,
Who sent thee, thou shalt have the
noblest steed 181
In all my study L double thee the

In all my studs, . . I double thee the marks,

And give the raiment threefold. More than this. . .

Say thou to David, that the guests who

At board with me, and drink of my own

Are Madoc and Lord Ririd. Tell the King,

That thus it is Lord Rhys of Dinevawr Delighteth to do honour to the sons Of Owen, of his old and honour'd friend.

XIII. LLEWELYN

FAREWELL, my brother, cried the Ocean Chief;

A little while farewell! as through the gate

Of Dinevawr he pass'd, to pass again That hospitable threshold never more.

And thou too, O thou good old man, true friend Of Owen, and of Owen's house, farewell!

'Twill not be told me, Rhys, when thy grey hairs

Are to the grave gone down; but oftentimes

In the distant world I shall remember thee,

And think that, come thy summons when it may,

Thou wilt not leave a braver man behind...

Now God be with thee, Rhys!

The old Chief paused A moment ere he answer'd, as for pain; Then shaking his hoar head, I never yet Gave thee this hand unwillingly before! When for a guest I spread the board, my heart

Will think on him, whom ever with most joy

It leapt to welcome: should I lift again
The spear against the Saxon, . . for old
Rhys

Hath that within him yet, that could uplift 20

The Cimbric spear, . . I then shall wish his aid,

Who oft has conquer'd with me: when I kneel

In prayer to Heaven, an old man's prayer shall beg

A blessing on thee!

Madoc answer'd not, But press'd his hand in silence, then sprang up

And spurr'd his courser on. A weary way,

Through forest and o'er fell, Prince Madoc rode;

And now he skirts the bay whose reckless waves

Roll o'er the plain of Gwaelod: fair fields

And busy towns and happy villages, 30 They overwhelm'd in one disastrous day:

For they by their eternal siege had sapp'd

The bulwark of the land, while Seithenyn Took of his charge no thought, till in his sloth

And riotous cups surprised, he saw the waves

Roll like an army o'er the levell'd mound.

A supplicant in other courts, he mourn'd His crime and ruin; in another's court The kingly harp of Garanhir was heard, Wailing his kingdom wreck'd; and many a Prince,

Warn'd by the visitation, sought and gain'd

A saintly crown, Tyneio, Merini, Boda and Brenda and Aëlgyvarch, Gwynon and Celynin and Gwynodyl.

To Bardsey was the Lord of Ocean bound:

Bardsey, the holy Islet, in whose soil Did many a Chief and many a Saint repose,

His great progenitors. He mounts the

Her canvass swells before the breeze, the

Sings round her sparkling keel, and soon the Lord 50

Of Ocean treads the venerable shore.

There was not, on that day, a speck to stain

The azure heaven; the blessed Sun alone In unapproachable divinity

Career'd, rejoicing in his fields of light. How beautiful, beneath the bright blue

The billows heave! one glowing green expanse,

Save where along the bending line of shore

Such hue is thrown, as when the peacock's neck

Assumes its proudest tint of amethyst, Embathed in emerald glory. All the flocks 6r

Of Ocean are abroad: like floating foam

The sea-gulls rise and fall upon the waves;

With long protruded neck the cormorants

Wing their far flight aloft, and round and round

The plovers wheel, and give their note of joy.

It was a day that sent into the heart
A summer feeling: even the insect

From their dark nooks and coverts issued forth,

To sport through one day of existence more:

The solitary primrose on the bank Seem'd now as though it had no cause to mourn

Its bleak autumnal birth; the Rocks, and Shores,

The Forest and the everlasting Hills, Smiled in that joyful sunshine, . . they partook

The universal blessing.

To this Isle, Where his forefathers were to dust consign'd,

Did Madoc come for natural piety, Ordering a solemn service for their souls. Therefore for this the Church that day

was drest:

For this the Abbot, in his alb arrayed,
At the high altar stood; for this infused,
Sweet incense from the waving thuribule

Rose like a mist, and the grey brother-hood

Chaunted the solemn mass. And now on high

The mighty Mystery had been elevate, And now around the graves the brethren In long array proceed: each in his hand, Tall as the staff of some wayfaring man, Bears the brown taper, with their daylight flames

Dimming the cheerful day. Before the train

The Cross is borne, where, fashion'd to the life

In shape and size and ghastly colouring, The aweful Image hangs. Next, in its shrine

Of gold and crystal, by the Abbot held, The mighty Mystery came; on either hand

Three Monks uphold above, on silver wands.

The purple pall. With holy water next A father went, therewith from hyssop branch

Sprinkling the graves; the while, with one accord,

The solemn psalm of mercy all entoned.

Pure was the faith of Madoc, though his mind

To all this pomp and solemn circumstance

Yielded a willing homage. But the place

Was holy;.. the dead air, which underneath

Those arches never felt the healthy sun, Nor the free motion of the elements, Chilly and damp, infused associate awe: The sacred odours of the incense still

Floated; the daylight and the taperflames

Commingled, dimming each, and each bedimm'd;

And as the slow procession paced along, Still to their hymn, as if in symphony, The regular foot-fall sounded: swelling now,

Their voices in one chorus, loud and deep, Rung through the echoing aisles; and when it ceased,

The silence of that huge and sacred pile

Came on the heart. What wonder if the Prince

Yielded his homage there? the influences

Of that sweet autumn day made every sense

Alive to every impulse, . . and beneath The stones whereon he stood, his ancestors

Were mouldering, dust to dust. Father! quoth he,

When now the rites were ended, . . far away

It hath been Madoc's lot to pitch his tent

On other shores; there, in a foreign land.

Far from my father's burial-place, must I
Be laid to rest; yet would I have my
name

Be held with theirs in memory. I beseech you.

Have this a yearly rite for evermore, 130 As I will leave endowment for the same, And let me be remember'd in the prayer. The day shall be a holy day with me,

While I do live; they who come after me

Will hold it holy; it will be a bond Of love and brotherhood, when all be-

Hath been dissolved; and though wide ocean rolls

Between my people and their mother Isle,

This shall be their communion. They shall send,

Link'd in one sacred feeling at one hour, In the same language, the same prayer to Heaven, 141

And each remembering each in piety,

Pray for the other's welfare.

The old man Partook that feeling, and some pious tears

Fell down his aged cheek. Kinsman and son,

It shall be so! said he; and thou shalt be

Remember'd in the prayer: nor then alone;

But till my sinking sands be quite run out,

This feeble voice shall, from its solitude, Go up for thee to Heaven!

And now the bell Rung out its cheerful summons; to the

hall, 151 In seemly order, pass the brotherhood: The serving-men wait with the ready

The place of honour to the Prince is given,

The Abbot's right-hand guest; the viands smoke,

The horn of ale goes round: and now, the cates

Removed, for days of festival reserved, Comes choicer beverage, clary, hippocras, And mead mature, that to the goblet's brim

Sparkles and sings and smiles. It was

()f that allowable and temperate mirth Which leaves a joy for memory. Madoc told

His tale; and thus, with question and reply

And cheerful intercourse, from noon till nones

The brethren sate; and when the quire was done,

Renew'd their converse till the vesper bell.

But then the Porter call'd Prince Madoc out.

To speak with one, he said, who from the land

Had sought him and required his private ear.

Madoc in the moonlight met him: in his hand 170

The stripling held an oar, and on his back,

Like a broad shield, the coracle was hung.

Uncle! he cried, and with a gush of tears,

Sprung to the glad embrace.

O my brave boy! Llewelyn! my dear boy! with stifled voice,

And interrupted utterance, Madoc cried; And many times he claspt him to his breast,

And many times drew back and gazed upon him,

Wiping the tears away which dimm'd the sight,

And told him how his heart had yearn'd for him,

180
As with a father's love and hade him

As with a father's love, and bade him now

Forsake his lonely haunts and come with him,

And sail beyond the seas and share his fate.

No! by my God! the high-hearted youth replied.

It never shall be said Llewelyn left

His father's murderer on his father's throne!

I am the rightful king of this poor land...

Go thou, and wisely go; but I must stay.

That I may save my people. Tell me, Uncle, 189 The story of thy fortunes; I can hear it Here in this lonely Isle, and at this hour, Securely.

Nay, quoth Madoc, tell me first Where are thy haunts and coverts, and what hope

Thou hast to bear thee up? Why goest

thou not To thy dear father's friend in Powysland

There at Mathraval would Cyveilioc give A kinsman's welcome; or at Dinevawr, The guest of honour shouldst thou be with Rhys:

And he belike from David might obtain Some recompence, though poor.

What recompence? Exclaim'd Llewelyn; what hath he to give.

But life for life? and what have I to

But vengeance, and my father Yorwerth's throne?

If with aught short of this my soul could

Would I not through the wide world follow thee.

Dear Uncle! and fare with thee, well or ill.

And show to thine old age the tenderness

My childhood found from thee!.. What hopes I have

Let time display. Have thou no fear for me!

My bed is made within the ocean caves, Of sea-weeds, bleach'd by many a sun and shower;

I know the mountain dens, and every hold

And fastness of the forest; and I know, . .

What troubles him by day and in his dreams, . .

There's many an honest heart in Gwyneth yet!

But tell me thine adventure; that will be A joy to think of in long winter nights, When stormy billows make my lullaby.

So as they walk'd along the moonlight shore.

Did Madoc tell him all; and still he strove, 220

By dwelling on that noble end and aim, That of his actions was the heart and life.

To win him to his wish. It touch'd the youth;

And when the Prince had ceased, he heaved a sigh,

Long-drawn and deep, as if regret were there.

No, no! he cried, it must not be! lo yonder

My native mountains, and how beautiful They rest in the moonlight! I was nurst among them;

They saw my sports in childhood, they have seen

My sorrows, they have saved me in the hour 230

Of danger; . . I have vow'd, that as they were

My cradle, they shall be my monument!..

But we shall meet again, and thou wilt find me,

When next thou visitest thy native Isle, King in Aberfraw!

Never more, Llewelyn, Madoc replied, shall I behold the shores Of Britain, nor will ever tale of me Reach the Green Isle again. With fearful care 238

I chuse my little company, and leave No traces of our path, where Violence, And bloody Zeal, and bloodier Avarice Might find their blasting way.

If it be so, .

And wise is thy resolve, the youth replied,

Thou wilt not know my fate; . . but this be sure,

It shall not be inglorious. I have in me A hope from Heaven. . . Give me thy blessing, Uncle!

Llewelyn, kneeling on the sand, embraced

His knees, with lifted head and streaming eyes

Listening. He rose, and fell on Madoc's neck.

And clasp'd him, with a silent agony, . . Then launch'd his coracle, and took his way, 251

A lonely traveller on the moonlight sea.

XIV. LLAIAN

Now hath Prince Madoe left the holy Isle.

And homeward to Aberfraw, through the wilds

Of Arvon, bent his course. A little way He turn'd aside, by natural impulses Moved, to behold Cadwallon's lonely hut.

That lonely dwelling stood among the hills,

By a grey mountain-stream; just elevate

Above the winter torrents did it stand, Upon a craggy bank; an orchard slope Arose behind, and joyous was the scene In early summer, when those antic trees Shone with their blushing blossoms, and the flax

Twinkled beneath the breeze its liveliest

But save the flax-field and that orchard slope,

All else was desolate, and now it wore ()ne sober hue: the narrow vale which wound

Among the hills was grey with rocks, that peer'd

Above its shallow soil; the mountain

Was loose with stones bestrewn, which oftentimes

Clattered adown the steep, beneath the foot

Of straggling goat dislodged; tower'd with crags,

One day, when winter's work hath loosen'd them.

To thunder down. All things assorted

With that grey mountain hue; the low stone lines.

Which scarcely seem'd to be the work of

The dwelling rudely rear'd with stones unhewn.

The stubble flax, the crooked apple-trees Grey with their fleecy moss and missel-

The white-bark'd birch now leafless, and the ash

Whose knotted roots were like the rifted rock.

Through which they forced their way. Adown the vale,

Broken by stones and o'er a stony bed, Roll'd the loud mountain-stream.

When Madoc came, A little child was sporting by the brook, Floating the fallen leaves, that he might see them

Whirl in the eddy now, and now be

Down the descent, now on the smoother

Sail onward far away. But when he heard

The horse's tramp, he raised his head and watch'd

The Prince, who now dismounted and drew nigh.

The little boy still fix'd his eyes on him, His bright blue eyes; the wind just

moved the curls That cluster'd round his brow; and so Of curd-like whiteness, with no foreign he stood.

His rosy cheeks still lifted up to gaze In innocent wonder. Madoc took his hand.

And now had ask'd his name, and if he dwelt

There in the hut, when from that cottage-door

A woman came, who, seeing Madoc, stopt, With such a fear, . . for she had cause for fear, . .

As when a bird returning to her nest, 50 Turns to a tree beside, if she behold

Some prying boy too near the dear retreat.

Howbeit, advancing soon, she now approach'd

The approaching Prince, and timidly enquired,

If on his wayfare he had lost the track. That thither he had strayed. Not so, replied

The gentle Prince; but having known this place,

And its old habitants, I came once more To see the lonely hut among the hills. Hath it been long your dwelling?

Some few years Here we have dwelt, quoth she, my child and I.

Will it please you enter, and partake such fare

As we can give? Still timidly she spake, But gathering courage from the gentle mien

him with whom she conversed. Madoc thank'd

Her friendly proffer, and toward the hut They went, and in his arms he took the

Who is his father? said the Prince, but wish'd

The word unutter'd; for thereat her cheek

Was flush'd with sudden heat and manifest pain;

And she replied, He perish'd in the war.

They enter'd now her home; she spread the board,

And set before her guest soft curds, and cheese

die

Adulterate, and what fruits the orchard | They say Prince Hoel's body was not

And that old British beverage which the bees

Had toil'd to purvey all the summer

Three years, said Madoc, have gone by, since here

I found a timely welcome, overworn With toil and sorrow and sickness: . .

three long years! 'Twas when the battle had been waged hard by.

Upon the plain of Arvon.

She grew pale, Suddenly pale; and seeing that he mark'd

The change, she told him, with a feeble

That was the fatal fight which widow'd her.

O Christ, cried Madoc, 'tis a grief to

How many a gallant Briton died that

In that accursed strife! I trod the field When all was over, . . I beheld them heap'd . .

Ay, like ripe corn within the reaper's

Strewn round the bloody spot where Hoel lav:

Brave as he was, himself cut down at last.

Oppress'd by numbers, gash'd with wounds, yet still

Clenching in his dead hand the broken sword!..

But you are moved, ... you weep at what I tell.

Forgive me, that renewing my own grief, I should have waken'd yours! Did you then know

Prince Hoel?

She replied, Oh no! my lot Was humble, and my loss a humble one; Yet was it all to me! They say, quoth

And, as she spake, she struggled to bring forth

With painful voice the interrupted words. . .

found;

But you who saw him dead perchance can tell

Where he was laid, and by what friendly hand.

Even where he fell, said Madoc, is his grave :

For he who buried him was one whose faith

Reck'd not of boughten prayers, nor passing bell.

There is a hawthorn grows beside the place,

A solitary tree, nipt by the winds, 110 That it doth seem a fitting monument For one untimely slain... But wherefore dwell we

On this ungrateful theme?

He took a harp Which stood beside, and passing o'er its chords

Made music. At the touch the child drew nigh,

Pleased by the sound, and leant on Madoc's knee,

And bade him play again. So Madoc play'd,

For he had skill in minstrelsy, and raised

His voice, and sung Prince Hoel's lay of love.

I have harness'd thee, my Steed of

shining grey, 120 And thou shalt bear me to the dear white walls.

I love the white walls by the verdant bank,

That glitter in the sun, where Bashfulness

Watches the silver sea-mew sail along. I love that glittering dwelling, where we

The ever-sounding billows; for there dwells

The shapely Maiden, fair as the seaspray,

Her cheek as lovely as the apple flower, Or summer evening's glow. I pine for her:

In crowded halls my spirit is with her;

Through the long sleepless night I think on her;

And heavings in some and health is left.

And happiness is gone, and health is lost, Andfled the flush of youth, and I am pale As the pale ocean on a sunless morn.

I pine away for her, yet pity her,

That she should spurn so true a love as mine.

He ceased, and laid his hand upon the child, . .

And didst thou like the song? The child replied, . .

Oh yes! it is a song my mother loves, And so I love it too. He stoopt and kiss'd

The boy, who still was leaning on his knee,

Already grown familiar. I should like To take thee with me, quoth the Ocean Lord.

Over the seas.

Thou art Prince Madoc, then !..
The mother cried, .. thou art indeed the
Prince!

That song.. that look.. and at his feet she fell,

Crying . . Oh take him, Madoc! save the child!

Thy brother Hoel's orphan!

Long it was

Ere that in either agitated heart
The tumult could subside. One while
the Prince 150
Gazed on the child, tracing intently

there

His brother's lines; and now he caught him up,

And kiss'd his cheek, and gazed again till all

Was dim and dizzy, . . then blest God, and vow'd

That he should never need a father's love.

At length when copious tears had now relieved

Her burthen'd heart, and many a broken speech

In tears had died away, O Prince, she cried,

Long hath it been my dearest prayer to heaven,

That I might see thee once, and to thy love 160

Commit this friendless boy! For many a time.

In phrase so fond did Hoel tell thy worth That it hath waken'd misery in me

To think I could not as a sister claim

Thy love! and therefore was it that till now

Thou knew'st me not; for I entreated him

That he would never let thy virtuous eye Look on my guilt, and make me feel my shame.

Madoc, I did not dare to see thee then. Thou wilt not scorn me now, . . for l

have now 170
Forgiven myself; and, while I here perform'd

A mother's duty in this solitude,

Have felt myself forgiven.

With that she clasp'd His hand, and bent her face on it and wept.

Anon collecting she pursued,.. My name Is Llaian: by the chance of war I fell

Into his power, when all my family Had been cutoff, all in one hour of blood. He saved me from the ruffian's hand, he sooth'd

With tenderest care my sorrow. . . You can tell 180

How gentle he could be, and how his eyes, So full of life and kindliness, could win All hearts to love him. Madoc, I was young:

I had no living friend; . . and when I

This infant to his arms, when with such joy

He view'd it o'er and o'er again, and press'd

A father's kiss upon its cheek, and turn'd To me, and made me feel more deeply yet

A mother's deep delight, . . oh! I was proud

To think my child in after years should say,

Prince Hoel was his father!

Thus I dwelt

In the white dwelling by the verdant bank, . .

Though not without my melancholy hours,

Happy. The joy it was when I beheld His steed of shining grey come hastening on.

Across the yellow sand!.. Alas, ere long, King Owen died. I need not tell thee, Madoc.

With what a deadly and forefeeling fear I heard how Hoel seized his father's throne.

Nor with what ominous woe I welcomed him, 200

In that last little miserable hour Ambition gave to love. I think his heart.

Brave as it was, misgave him. When I spake

Of David and my fears, he smiled upon

But 'twas a smile that came not from the heart...

A most ill-boding smile! . . O Madoc!

Madoc!

You know not with what misery I saw His parting steps, . . with what a dreadful hope

I watch'd for tidings!.. And at length it came, ..

Came like a thunderbolt! . . I sought the field!

O Madoc, there were many widows there, But none with grief like mine! I look'd around:

I dragg'd aside the bodies of the dead, To search for him, in vain;..and then a hope

Seized me, which it was agony to lose!

Night came. I did not heed the storm of night;

But for the sake of this dear babe, I sought

Shelter in this lone hut: 'twas desolate; And when my reason had return'd, I thought

That here the child of Hoel might be

Till we could claim thy care. But thou, meantime.

Didst go to roam the Ocean; so I learnt
To bound my wishes here. The
carkanet.

The embroider'd girdle, and what other gauds

Were once my vain adornments, soon were changed

For things of profit, goats and bees, and this,

The tuneful solace of my solitude.

Madoc, the harp is as a friend to me; I sing to it the songs which Hoel loved, And Hoel's own sweet lays; it comforts

And gives me joy in grief.

Often I grieved, To think the son of Hoel should grow up In this unworthy state of poverty;

Till Time, who softens all regrets, had

worn

That vain regret away, and I became Humbly resign'd to God's unerring will. To him I look'd for healing, and he pour'd

His balm into my wounds. I never form'd

A prayer for more, . . and lo! the happiness

Which he hath, of his mercy, sent me now!

XV. THE EXCOMMUNICATION

On Madoc's docile courser Llaian sits, Holding her joyful boy; the Prince beside

Paces afoot, and like a gentle Squire Leads her loose bridle; from the saddle-

His shield and helmet hang, and with the lance.

Stafflike, he stay'd his steps. Before the sun

Had climb'd his southern eminence, they left

The mountain feet; and hard by Bangor

Travelling the plain before them they

A lordly cavalcade, for so it seem'd, so Of knights, with hawk in hand and hounds in leash.

Squires, pages, serving-men, and armed grooms,

And many a sumpter-beast and laden wain,

Far following in the rear. The bravery Of glittering bauldricks and of high-plumed crests,

Embroider'd surcoats and emblazon'd shields,

And lances whose long streamers play'd aloft,

Made a rare pageant, as with sound of trump,

Tambour and cittern, proudly they went on;

And ever, at the foot-fall of their steeds, The tinkling horse-bells, in rude symphony, 21

Accorded with the joy.

What have we here? Quoth Madoc then to one who stood beside

The threshold of his osier-woven hut.
'Tis the great Saxon Prelate, he return'd,
Come hither for some end, I wist not
what.

Only be sure no good!.. How stands the tide?

Said Madoc; can we pass?..'Tis even at the flood,

The man made answer, and the Monas-

Will have no hospitality to spare 30 For one of Wales to-day. Be ye content To guest with us.

He took the Prince's sword: The daughter of the house brought water then,

And wash'd the stranger's feet; the board was spread,

And o'er the bowl they communed of the days

Ere ever Saxon set his hateful foot Upon the beautiful Isle.

As so they sate, The bells of the Cathedral rung abroad Unusual summons. What is this? exclaim'd

Prince Madoc: let us see!.. Forthwith they went, 40

He and his host, their way. They found the rites

Begun; the mitred Baldwin, in his hand

Holding a taper, at the altar stood.

Let him be cursed!.. were the words which first

Assail'd their ears, . . living and dead, in limb

And life, in soul and body, be he curst Here and hereafter! Let him feel the curse

At every moment, and in every act,

By night and day, in waking and in sleep!

We cut him off from Christian fellowship; 50 Of Christian sacraments we deprive his

Of Christian sacraments we deprive hi soul; Of Christian hurial we denrive his cornse

Of Christian burial we deprive his corpse; And when that carrion to the Fiends is left

In unprotected earth, thus let his soul Be quench'd in hell!

He dash'd upon the floor

His taper down, and all the ministring Priests

Extinguish'd each his light, to consummate

The imprecation.

Whom is it ye curse, Cried Madoc, with these horrors? They replied,

The contumacious Prince of Powysland, 60 Cyveilioc.

What! quoth Madoc, and

his eye
Grew terrible, . . Who is he that sets his
foot

In Gwyneth, and with hellish forms like

these
Dare outrage here Mathraval's noble
Lord?

We wage no war with women nor with Priests:

But if there be a knight amid your train, Who will stand forth, and speak before my face

Dishonour of the Prince of Powys-land, Lo! here stand I, Prince Madoc, who will make

That slanderous wretch cry craven in the dust, 70

And eat his lying words!

Be temperate!

Quoth one of Baldwin's Priests, who, Briton born, Had known Prince Madoc in his father's Saxon, Jute, Angle, or whatever name

It is our charge, throughout this Christian land,

To call upon all Christian men to join The armies of the Lord, and take the

That so, in battle with the Infidels. The palm of victory or of martyrdom, Glorious alike, may be their recompense. This holy badge, whether in godless scorn.

Or for the natural blindness of his heart, Cyveilioc hath refused; thereby incurring

The pain, which, not of our own impulse,

Inflict upon his soul, but at the will Of our most holy Father, from whose word

Lies no appeal on earth.

'Tis well for thee, Intemperate Prince! said Baldwin, that our blood

Flows with a calmer action than thine

Thy brother David hath put on the cross.

To our most pious warfare piously Pledging his kingly sword. Do thou the like,

And for this better object lay aside Thine other enterprize, which, lest it rob Judea of one single Christian arm, Follow thou We do condemn as sinful. The banner of the Church to Palestine: So shalt thou expiate this rash offence, Against the which we else should fulminate

Our ire, did we not see in charity, And therefore rather pity than resent, The rudeness of this barbarous land.

At that, Scorn tempering wrath, yet anger sharpening scorn,

Madoc replied. Barbarians as we are. Lord Prelate, we received the law of

Many a long age before your pirate sires Had left their forest dens; nor are we

To learn that law from Norman or from Dane.

Suit best your mongrel race! Ye think, perchance.

That like your own poor woman-hearted

We too in Gwyneth are to take the yoke Of Rome upon our necks; . . but you may tell

Your Pope, that when I sail upon the

I shall not strike a topsail for the breath Of all his maledictions!

Saying thus, He turn'd away, lest farther speech might call

Farther reply, and kindle farther wrath, More easy to avoid than to allay.

Therefore he left the church; and soon his mind

To gentler mood was won, by social talk And the sweet prattle of that blue-eyed

Whom in his arms he fondled.

But when now Evening had settled, to the door there

One of the brethren of the Monastery, Who called Prince Madoc forth. Apart they went,

And in the low suspicious voice of fear, Though none was nigh, the Monk began. Be calm.

Prince Madoc, while I speak, and patiently

Hear to the end! Thou know'st that, in

Becket did excommunicate thy sire 130 For his unlawful marriage; but the King,

Feeling no sin in conscience, heeded not The inefficient censure. Now, when Baldwin

Beheld his monument to-day, impell'd, As we do think, by anger against thee, He swore that, even as Owen in his deeds Disown'd the Church when living, even

The Church disown'd him dead, and that his corpse

No longer should be suffered to pollute The Sanctuary . . Be patient, I beseech, And hear me out. Gerald at this, who felt 141

A natural horror, sought, . . as best he knew

The haughty Primate's temper, . . to dissuade

By politic argument, and chiefly urged The quick and fiery nature of our na-

How at the sight of such indignity, They would arise in arms, and limb from limb

Tear piecemeal him and all his company. So far did this prevail, that he will now Commit the deed in secret; and, this night.

Thy father's body from its resting place, () Madoc! shall be torn, and cast aside In some unhallow'd pit, with foul disgrace

And contumelious wrong.

Sayest thou to-night? Quoth Madoc. . . Ay, at midnight, he replied,

Shall this implety be perpetrated.

Therefore hath Gerald, for the reverence He bears to Owen's royal memory,

Sent thee the tidings. Now be temperate

In thy just anger, Prince! and shed no

Thou know'st how dearly the Plantagenet

Atones for Becket's death; and be thou

Though thou thyself shouldst sail bevond the storm.

That it would fall on Britain.

While he spake,

Madoc was still; the feeling work'd too deep

For speech, or visible sign. At length he said.

What if amid their midnight sacrilege I should appear among them?

It were well; The Monk replied, if, at a sight like that, Thou canst withhold thy hand.

Oh, fear me not! Good and true friend, said Madoc. I am calm.

And calm as thou beholdest me will prove In word and action. Quick I am to feel Light ills, . . perhaps o'er-hasty : summer gnats,

Finding my cheek unguarded, may infix Their skin-deep stings, to vex and irritate:

But if the wolf, or forest boar, be nigh. I am awake to danger. Even so

Bear I a mind of steel and adamant

Against all greater wrongs. My heart hath now

Received its impulse; and thou shalt behold

How in this strange and hideous circum-

I shall find profit. . . Only, my true friend.

Let me have entrance.

At the western porch, Between the complines and the matinbell, . .

The Monk made answer: thou shalt find the door

Thy single person will suffice; For Baldwin knows his danger, and the

Of guilt or fear convicts him, both alike Opprobrious. Now, farewell!

Then Madoc took 190 His host aside, and in his private ear Told him the purport, and wherein his help

Was needed. Night came on; the hearth was heapt,

The women went to rest. They twain, the while.

Sate at the board, and while the untasted bowl

Stood by them, watch'd the glass whose falling sands

Told out the weary hours. The hour is come ;

Prince Madoc helm'd his head, and from his neck

He slung the bugle-horn; they took their shields.

And lance in hand went forth. now arrived.

The bolts give back before them, and the door

Rolls on its heavy hinge.

Beside the grave Stood Baldwin and the Prior, who, albeit Cambrian himself, in fear and awe obey'd The lordly Primate's will. They stood and watch'd

Their ministers perform the irreverent work.

And now with spade and mattock have they broken

Into the house of death, and now have they

From the stone coffin wrench'd the iron cramps.

When sudden interruption startled them, And clad in complete mail from head to foot,

They saw the Prince come in. Their tapers gleam'd

Upon his visage, as he wore his helm Open; and when in that pale countenance...

For the strong feeling blanch'd his cheek, . . they saw

His father's living lineaments, a fear Like ague shook them. But anon that fit Of scared imagination to the sense Of other peril yielded, when they heard Prince Madoc's dreadful voice. Stay! he exclaim'd,

As now they would have fled; . . stir not a man, . .

Or if I once put breath into this horn, All Wales will hear, as if dead Owen call'd

For vengeance from that grave. Stir not a man,

Or not a man shall live! The doors are watch'd,

And ye are at my mercy!

But at that, Baldwin from the altar seized the crucifix,

And held it forth to Madoc, and cried out,

He who strikes me, strikes Him; forbear, on pain

Of endless——
Peace! quoth Madoc, and profane not 230

The holy Cross, with those polluted hands

Of midnight sacrilege! . . Peace! I harm thee not, . .

Be wise, and thou art safe. . . For thee, thou know'st.

Prior, that if thy treason were divulged, David would hang thee on thy steeple top, To feed the steeple daws: Obey and live!

Go, bring fine linen and a coffer meet To bear these relics; and do ye, meanwhile,

Proceed upon your work.

They at his word Raised the stone cover, and display'd the dead, 240

In royal grave-clothes habited, his arms Cross'd on the breast, with precious gums and spice

Fragrant, and incorruptibly preserved. At Madoc's bidding, round the corpse

they wrap
The linen web, fold within fold involved;
They laid it in the coffer, and with cloth
At head and foot filled every interval
And prest it down compact; they closed

the lid,

And Madoc with his signet seal'd it thrice.

Then said he to his host, Bear thou at dawn 250
This treasure to the ships. My father's

Shall have their resting-place, where mine one day

May moulder by their side. He shall be free

In death, who living did so well maintain His and his country's freedom. As for

For your own safety, ye I ween will keep

My secret safe. So saying, he went his way.

XVI. DAVID

Now hath the Lord of Ocean once again Set foot in Mona. Llaian there receives Sisterly greeting from the royal maid, Who, while she tempers to the public

Her welcome, safely to the boy indulged In fond endearments of instinctive love. When the first flow of joy was overpast, How went the equipment on, the Prince enquired.

Nay, brother, quoth Goervyl, ask thou that

Of Urien;..it hath been his sole employ Daily from cock-crow until even-song, That he hath laid aside all other thoughts,

Forgetful even of me! She said and smiled

Playful reproach upon the good old man, Who in such chiding as affection loves, Dallying with terms of wrong, return'd rebuke.

There, Madoc, pointing to the shore, he cried,

There are they moor'd; six gallant barks, as trim

And worthy of the sea as ever yet

Gave canvass to the gale. The mariners Flock to thy banner, and the call hath roused

Many a brave spirit. Soon as Spring shall serve,

There need be no delay. I should depart Without one wish that lingers, could we bear

Ririd from hence, and break poor Rodri's chains.

Thy lion-hearted brother; ... and that boy.

If he were with us, Madoe! that dear boy

Llewelyn!

Sister, said the Prince at that, How sped the Queen?

Oh, Madoe! she replied, A hard and unrelenting heart hath he. 30 The gentle Emma told me she had fail'd, And that was all she told; but in her

I could see sorrow struggling. She complains not,

And yet I know, in bitterness laments
The hour which brought her as a victim
here.

Then I will seek the Monarch, Madoe cried;

And forth he went. Cold welcome David gave,

Such as might chill a suppliant; but the Prince

Fearless began. I found at Dinevawr Our brother Ririd, and he made his suit That he might follow me, a banish'd man. He waits thine answer at the court of Rhys.

Now I beseech thee, David, say to him His father's hall is open!

Then the King Replied, I told thee, Madoc, thy request Displeased me heretofore; I warn'd thee, too,

To shun the rebel; yet my messenger Tells me, the guests at Dinevawr who sate

At board with Rhys and drank of his own cup

Were Madoc and Lord Ririd... Was this well, 50

This open disobedience to my will,

And my express command?

Madoc subdued His rising wrath. If I should tell thee, Sire.

He answer'd, by what chance it so fell out.

I should of disobedience stand excused, Even were it here a crime. Yet think again,

David, and let thy better mind prevail! I am his surety here; he comes alone; The strength of yonder armament is mine:

And when did I deceive thee? . . I did hope, 60

For natural love and public decency, That ye would part in friendship..let that pass!

He may remain and join me in the hour Of embarkation. But for thine own sake Cast off these vile suspicions, and the fear That makes its danger! Call to mind, my brother,

The rampart that we were to Owen's throne!

Are there no moments when the thoughts and loves

Of other days return?..Let Rodri loose! Restore him to his birthright!..Why wouldst thou

Hold him in chains, when benefits would bind

His noble spirit?

Leave me! cried the King; Thou know'st the theme is hateful to my ear.

41 I have the mastery now, and idle words,

Madoc, shall never thrust me from the throne,

Which this right arm in battle hardly won.

There must he lie till nature set him free, And so deliver both. Trespass no more!

A little yet bear with me, Madoc cried. I leave this land for ever; let me first Behold my brother Rodri, lest he think My summer love be withered, and in wrath 82

Remember me hereafter.

Leave me, Madoc!
Speedily, ere indulgence grow a fault,
Exclaim'd the Monarch. Do not tempt
my wrath;

Thou know'st me!

Ay! the Ocean Prince replied.
I know thee, David, and I pity thee,
Thou poor, suspicious, miserable man!
Friend hast thou none, except thy
country's foe,

That hateful Saxon, he whose bloody hand

Pluck'd out thy brethren's eyes; and for thy kin,

Them hast thou made thy perilous enemies.

What if the Lion Rodri were abroad?
What if Llewelyn's banner were display'd?

The sword of England could not save thee then.

Frown not, and menace not! for what am I.

That I should fear thine anger?.. And with that

He turn'd indignant from the wrathful King.

XVII. THE DEPARTURE

WINTER hath pass'd away; the vernal storms

Have spent their rage, the ships are stored, and now

To-morrow they depart. That day a Boy,

Weary and foot-sore, to Aberfraw came, Who to Goervyl's chamber made his way, And caught the hem of her garment, and exclaim'd,

A boon, . . a boon, . . dear Lady! Nor did he

Wait more reply than that encouragement.

Which her sweet eye and lovely smile bestow'd:

I am a poor, unhappy, orphan boy, to Born to fair promises and better hopes, But now forlorn. Take me to be your page!..

For blessed Mary's sake, refuse me not! I have no friend on earth, nor hope but this.

tms.

The boy was fair; and though his eyes were swoln,

And cheek defiled with tears, and though his voice

Came choak'd by grief, yet to that carnest eye

And supplicating voice so musical,

It had not sure been easy to refuse The boon he begg'd. I cannot grant

thy suit, 20 Goervyl cried, but I can aid it, boy!... Go ask of Madoc!... And herself arose

Go ask of Madoc! . . And herself arose, And led him where her brother on the shore

That day the last embarkment oversaw. Mervyn then took his mantle by the skirt,

And knelt and made his suit; she too began

To sue, but Madoc smiling on the Maid, Won by the virtue of the countenance Which look'd for favour, lightly gave the yes.

Where wert thou, Caradoc, when that fair boy 30 Told his false tale? for hadst thou heard

the voice,
The gentle voice so musically sweet.

And seen that earnest eye, it would have heal'd

The wounded heart, and thou hadst voyaged on

The happiest man that ever yet forsook His native country! He, on board the bark, [stood

Leant o'er the vessel-side, and there he

40

And gazed, almost unconscious that he gazed,

Toward you distant mountains where she dwelt.

Senena, his beloved. Caradoc,

Senena, thy beloved, is at hand!

Her golden locks are clipt, and her blue

Is wandering through the throng in search of thee,

For whose dear sake she hath forsaken all.

You deem her false, that her frail constancy

Shrunk from her father's anger, that she lives

Another's victim bride; but she hath fled From that unnatural anger; hath escaped

oapeu

The unnatural union; she is on the shore, Senena, blue-eyed maid, a seemly boy, To share thy fortunes, to reward thy love,

And to the land of peace to follow thee, Over the ocean waves.

Now all is done. Stores, beeves, and flocks and water all aboard;

The dry East blows, and not a sign of change

Stains the clear firmament. The Sea-Lord sate

At the last banquet in his brother's court,

And heard the song: It told of Owen's fame,

When with his Normen and assembled force

Of Guienne and Gascony, and Anjou's strength, 60

The Fleming's aid and England's chosen troops,

Along the ascent of Berwyn, many a day The Saxon vainly on his mountain foes Denounced his wrath; for Mona's dragon sons

By wary patience baffled long his force, Winning slow Famine to their aid, and help'd

By the angry Elements, and Sickness sent

From Heaven, and Fear that of its vigour robb'd

The healthy arm; ... then in quick enterprize

Fell on his weary and dishearten'd host, Till with defeat and loss and obloquy 71 He fled with all his nations. Madoc gave

His spirit to the song; he felt the theme In every pulse; the recollection came, Revived and heighten'd to intenser pain, That in Aberfraw, in his father's hall, He never more should share the feast, nor hear

The echoing harp again! His heart was

And, yielding to its yearnings, in that mood

Of aweful feeling, he call'd forth the King, 80

And led him from the palace-porch, and stretch'd

His hand toward the ocean, and exclaim'd,

To-morrow over yon wide waves I go; To-morrow, never to return, I leave My native land! O David, O my brother, Turn not impatiently a reckless ear

To that affectionate and natural voice Which thou wilt hear no more! Release our brethren,

Recall the wanderers home, and link them to thee

By cordial confidence, by benefits 90 Which bless the benefactor. Be not thou As is the black and melancholy yew That strikes into the grave its baleful

roots,
And prospers on the dead!.. The Saxon
King,..

Think not I wrong him now; .. an hour like this

Hath soften'd all my harsher feelings down:

Nor will I hate him for his sister's sake, Thy gentle Queen, . . whom, that great God may bless,

And, blessing her, bless thee and our dear country,

Shall never be forgotten in my prayers; But he is far away; and should there come

The evil hour upon thee, . . if thy kin, Wearied by suffering, and driven desperate, Should lift the sword, or young Llewelyn | Were wet with silent tears.

His banner and demand his father's throne, . .

Were it not trusting to a broken reed, To lean on England's aid?.. I urge thee

For answer now: but sometimes, O my brother!

Sometimes recall to mind my parting

As 'twere the death-bed counsel of the friend

Who loved thee best!

The affection of his voice. So mild and solemn, soften'd David's

He saw his brother's eyes, suffused with

Shine in the moon-beam as he spake; the King

Remember'd his departure, and he felt Feelings, which long from his disnatured

Ambition had expell'd: he could almost Have follow'd their strong impulse. From the shore.

Madoc with quick and agitated step Had sought his home; the monarch went his way,

Serious and slow, and laid him down that night

With painful recollections, and such thoughts.

As might, if Heaven had will'd it, have matured

To penitence and peace.

The day is come. The adventurers in Saint Cybi's holy fane

Hear the last mass, and all assoil'd of

Partake the bread of Christian fellow-

Then, as the Priest his benediction gave, They knelt, in such an aweful stillness hush'd.

As with yet more oppression seem'd to

The burthen'd heart. At times and half supprest,

Womanly sobs were heard, and manly cliecks

Now forth they go.

And at the portal of the Church unfurl Prince Madoc's banner; at that sight

Burst from his followers, and the hills and rocks

Thrice echoed their acclaim.

There lie the ships. Their sails all loose, their streamers rolling out

With sinuous flow and swell, like watersnakes.

Curling aloft; the waves are gay with boats, Pinnace and barge and coracle, . . the

Swarms like the shore with life. what a sight

Of beauty for the spirit unconcern'd, If heart there be which unconcern'd

could view A sight like this!.. how yet more beau-

For him, whose soul can feel and under-

The solemn import! Yonder they em-

Youth, beauty, valour, virtue, reverend age

Some led by love of noble enterprize,

Others, who, desperate of their country's

Fly from the impending yoke; all warm alike

With confidence and high heroic hope, And all in one fraternal bond conjoin'd By reverence to their Chief, the best beloved

That ever yet on hopeful enterprize Led gallant army forth. He, even now Lord of himself, by faith in God and love

To man subdues the feeling of this hour. The bitterest of his being.

At this time. Pale, and with feverish eye, the King came up,

And led him somewhat from the throng apart,

Saying, I sent at day-break to release Rodri from prison, meaning that with thee

He should depart in peace; but he was

This very night he had escaped ! . . Perchance,

As I do hope, . . it was thy doing, Madoc ?

Is he aboard the fleet?

I would he were! Madoc replied; with what a lighten'd heart

Then should I sail away! Ririd is there

Alone . . alas! that this was done so

Reproach me not! half sullenly the

Answering, exclaim'd: Madoc, reproach me not!

Thou know'st how hardly I attain'd the throne;

And is it strange that I should guard with fear

The precious prize? . . Now, . . when Î would have taken

Thy counsel, . . be the evil on his head! Blame me not now, my brother, lest sometimes

I call again to mind thy parting words In sorrow!

God be with thee! Madoc cried; And if at times the harshness of a heart, Too prone to wrath, have wrong'd thee, let these tears

Efface all faults. I leave thee, O my brother.

With all a brother's feelings!

So he said. And grasp'd, with trembling tenderness, his hand.

Then calm'd himself, and moved toward the boat.

Emma, though tears would have their way and sighs

Would swell, suppressing still all words of woe,

Follow'd Goervyl to the extremest shore But then as on the plank the Maid set foot,

Did Emma, staying her by the hand, pluck out

wore

In reverence to its relic, and she cried. Yet ere we part change with me, dear Goervyl, . .

Dear sister, loved too well, or lost too soon!..

I shall betake me often to my prayers, Never in them, Goervyl, of thy name Unmindful; ... thou too wilt remember

Still in thy orisons; .. but God forefend That ever misery should make thee find This Cross thy only comforter!

She said. And kiss'd the holy pledge, as each to each

Transferr'd the mutual gift. Nor could the Maid

Answer, for agony, to that farewell; She held Queen Emma to her breast, and

She clasp'd her with a strong convulsive sob,

Silently. Madoc too in silence went, But prest a kiss on Emma's lips, and left

His tears upon her cheek. With dizzy

Gazing she stood, nor saw the boat push off, . .

The dashing of the oars awaken'd her; She wipes her tears away, to view once

Those dear familiar faces; . . they are

In the distance; never shall her waking

Behold them, till the hour of happiness, When death hath made her pure for perfect bliss!

Two hearts alone of all that company. Of all the thousands who beheld the scene,

Partook unmingled joy. Dumb with delight.

Young Hoel views the ships and feels the boat

Rock on the heaving waves; and Llaian felt

Comfort, . . though sad, yet comfort, . . that for her

The crucifix, which next her heart she No eye was left to weep, nor heart to mourn.

Hark! 'tis the mariners with voice attuned

Timing their toil! and now with gentle gales.

Slow from the holy haven they depart.

XVIII. RODRI

Now hath the evening settled; the broad Moon

Rolls through the rifted clouds. With gentle gales

Slowly they glide along, when they behold

A boat with press of sail and stress of

Speed forward to the fleet; and now, arrived

Beside the Chieftain's vessel, one enquires

If Madoc be aboard? the answer given, Swift he ascended up the lofty side.

With joyful wonder did the Ocean Lord Again behold Llewelyn; but he gazed Doubtfully on his comrade's coun-

tenance, . . A meagre man, severe of brow, his eye Thou dost view me, Madoc, he Stern.

exclaim'd. As 'twere a stranger's face. I marvel not!

The long afflictions of my prison house Have changed me.

Rodri! cried the Prince. and fell

Upon his neck; ... last night, subdued at length

By my solicitations, did the King Send to deliver thee, that thou shouldst

My happy enterprize; . . and thou art come.

Even to my wish!

Nay, Madoc, nay, not so ! He answered, with a stern and bitter smile:

This gallant boy hath given me liberty, And I will pay him with his father's

Ay, by my father's soul!.. Last night | With joy, to welcome me her rightful we fled

The house of bondage, and in the sea-

By day we lurk'd securely. Here I come.

Only to see thee once before I die, And say farewell, . . dear brother!

Would to God This purpose could be changed! the Sea

Lord cried:

But thou art roused by wrongs, and who shall tame

That lion heart ? . . This only, if your lot Fall favourable, will I beseech of ye, That to his Queen, the fair Plantagenet, All honourable humanity ye show, For her own virtue, and in gratitude,

As she hath pleaded for you, and hath urged

Her husband on your part, till it hath turn'd

His wrath upon herself. Oh! deal ye by her

As by your dearest sister in distress, 40 For even so dear is she to Madoc's heart: And now I know she from Aberfraw's tower

Watcheth these specks upon the moonlight sea,

And weeps for my departure, and for me Sends up her prayers to Heaven, nor thinks that now

I must make mine to man in her behalf!

Quoth Rodri, Rest assured for her. I swear.

By our dead mother, so to deal with her

As thou thyself wouldst dictate, as herself

Shall wish.

The tears fell fast from Madoc's eyes: O Britain! O my country! he exclaim'd.

For ever thus by civil strife convulsed. Thy children's blood flowing to satisfy Thy children's rage, how wilt thou still

support The struggle with the Saxon?

Rodri cried. Our strife shall not be long. Mona will

Lord;

And woe be to the King who rules by

When danger comes against him!

Fear not thou For Britain! quoth Llewelyn: for not

The country of our fathers shall resign Her name among the nations. Though her Sun

Slope from his eminence, the voice of

May yet arrest him on his downward wav.

My dreams by day, my visions in the night,

Are of her welfare. I shall mount the throne. . .

Yes, Madoc! and the Bard of years to

Who harps of Arthur's and of Owen's deeds.

Shall with the Worthies of his country

Llewelvn's name. Dear Uncle, fare thee well! . .

And I almost could wish I had been born Of humbler lot, that I might follow thee, And Oriana, freed from Roman thrall.

Companion of this noble enterprize. Think of Llewelyn often, who will oft Remember thee in love!

For the last time He press'd his Uncle's hand, and Rodri

The last farewell; then went the twain their way.

So over ocean through the moonlight

Prince Madoc sail'd with all his company.

No nobler crew fill'd that heroic bark 80 Which bore the first adventurers of the

To seek the Golden Fleece on barbarous shores:

Nor richlier fraught did that illustrious flect

Home to the Happy Island hold its way,

When Amadis with his prime chivalry, He of all chivalry himself the flower, Came from the rescue, proud of Roman spoils.

MADOC IN AZTLAN: PART II.

THE RETURN TO AZTLAN

Now go your way, ye gallant company, God and good Angels guard ye as ye go! Blow fairly, Winds of Heaven! Ye Ocean Waves.

Swell not in anger to that fated fleet! For not of conquest greedy, nor of gold, Seek they the distant world. . . Blow fairly, Winds!

Waft, Waves of Ocean, well your blessed load!

Fair blew the Winds, and safely did the Waves

Bear that beloved charge. It were a

Would rouse adventurous courage in a boy,

Making him long to be a mariner That he might rove the main, if I should

How pleasantly for many a summer-day, Over the sunny sea with wind at will, Prince Madoc sail'd; and of those happy Isles.

Which had he seen ere that appointed

Drove southward his slope course, there he had pitch'd

His tent, and blest his lot that it had fallen

In land so fair; and human blood had reek'd

Daily on Aztlan's devilish altars still. 20 But other doom was his, more arduous

10 Yet to achieve, worse danger to endure,

Worse evil to be quell'd, and higher good

Which passeth not away educed from ill:

Whereof all unforeseeing, yet for all Prepared at heart, he over ocean sails,

Wafted by gentle winds o'er gentle waves,

As if the elements combined to serve The perfect Prince, by God and man beloved.

And now how joyfully he views the land, Skirting like morning clouds the dusky sea; 31

With what a searching eye recalls to mind

Foreland and creek and cape; how happy now

Up the great river bends at last his way!

No watchman had been station'd on the height

To seek his sails, . . for with Cadwallon's hope

Too much of doubt was blended and of fear:

Yet thitherward whene'er he walked abroad

His face, as if instinctively, was turn'd; And duly morn and eve Lincoya there, As though religion led his duteous feet, Went up to gaze. He on a staff had scored

The promised moons and days; and many a time

Counting again its often-told account, So to beguile impatience, day by day Smooth'd off with more delight the daily notch.

But now that the appointed time was

Did that perpetual presence of his hope Haunt him, and mingle with his sleep, and mar

The natural rest, and trouble him by day. 50

That all his pleasure was at earliest light To take his station, and at latest eve, If he might see the sails where far away Through wide savannahs roll'd the silver stream.

Oh then with what a sudden start his blood

Flow'd from its quicken'd spring, when far away

He spied the glittering topsails! For a while

Distrustful of that happy sight, till now Slowly he sees them rise, and wind along Through wide savannahs up the silver stream.

Then with a breathless speed he flies to spread

The joy; and with Cadwallon now descends.

And drives adown the tide the light canoe.

And mounts the vessel-side, and once again

Falls at the Ocean Lord's beloved feet.

First of the general weal did Madoc ask;

Cadwallon answer'd, All as yet is well, And, by this seasonable aid secured,

Will well remain... Thy father? quoth the Prince.

Even so, replied Cadwallon, as that eye Of hesitation augurs, . . fallen asleep.

The good old man remember'd thee in death.

And bless'd thee ere he died.

By this the shores And heights were throng'd; from hill

to hill, from rock
To rock, the shouts of welcome rung
around.

Forward they press to view the man beloved.

Britons and Hoamen with one common joy

Hailing their common friend. Happy that day

Was he who heard his name from Madoc's voice;

Happy who met the greeting of his eye; Yea happy he who shared the general smile,

Amid the unacknowledged multitude.

Caermadoc, . . by that name Cadwallon's love

Call'd it in memory of the absent Prince, . .

Stood in a mountain vale, by rocks and heights,

A natural bulwark, girt. A rocky stream

Which from the fells came down there

spread itself

Into a quiet lake, to compass which Had been a two hours' pleasurable toil; And he, who from a well-strung bow could send

His shaft across, had needs a sinewy arm.

And might from many an archer far and near

Have borne away the bell. Here had the Chief

Chosen his abiding place, for strength preferr'd,

Where vainly might an host in equal arms

Attempt the difficult entrance; and for all

That could delight the eye and heart of man:

Whate'er of beauty or of usefulness Heart could desire, or eye behold, being here.

What he had found an idle wilderness Now gave rich increase to the husbandmen, 101

For Heaven had blest their labour. Flourishing

He left the happy vale; and now he saw

More fields reclaim'd, more habitations rear'd,

More harvests rising round. The reptile race,

And every beast of rapine, had retired From man's asserted empire; and the

Of axe and dashing oar, and fisher's net, And song beguiling toil, and pastoral pipe.

Were heard, where late the solitary hills Gave only to the mountain-cataract

Their wild response.

Here, Urien, cried the

Here, Urien, cried the Prince, These craggy heights and overhanging groves

Will make thee think of Gwyneth. And this hut.

Rejoin'd Cadwallon, with its roof of reeds.

Goervyl, is our palace: it was built

With lighter labour than Aberfraw's towers:

Yet, Lady, safer are its wattled sides

Than Mona's kingly walls. . . Like Gwyneth, said he?

Oh no! we neighbour nearer to the Sun, And with a more benignant eye the Lord 121

Of Light beholds us here.

So thus did they Cheerfully welcome to their new abode These, who, albeit aweary of their way. And glad to reach at length the place of rest,

Felt their hearts overburthen'd, and their eyes

Ready to overflow. Yet not the less The buzz of busy joy was heard around. Where every dwelling had its guest, and all 129 Gave the long eve to hospitable mirth.

II. THE TIDINGS

But when the Lord of Ocean from the stir

And tumult was retired, Cadwallon then Thus render'd his account.

When we had quell'd
The strength of Aztlan, we should have
thrown down

Her altars, cast her Idols to the fire, And on the ruins of her fanes accurst Planted the Cross triumphant. Vain it

To sow the seed where noxious weeds and briars

Must choke it in the growth.

Yet I had hope The purer influence of exampled good Might to the saving knowledge of the truth

Lead this bedarken'd race; and when thy ship

Fell down the stream to distant Britain bound.

All promised well. The strangers' God had proved

Mightier in war; and Aztlan could not choose

But see, nor seeing could she fail to love,

The freedom of his service. Few were now

The offerings at her altars, few the vouths

youths

And virgins to the temple-toils devote.

Therefore the Priests combined to save their craft;

20

And soon the rumour ran of evil signs And tokens; in the temple had been heard

Wailings and loud lament; the eternal fire

Gave dismally a dim and doubtful flame;

And from the censer, which at morn should steam

Sweet odours to the sun, a fetid cloud Black and portentous rose. And now no Priest

Approach'd our dwelling. Even the friendly Prince

Yuhidthiton was at Caermadoe now Rarely a guest; and if that tried goodwill 30

Which once he bore us did at times appear,

A sullen gloom and silence like remorse Followed the imagined crime.

But I the while Reck'd not the brooding of the storm;

for then My father to the grave was hastening

down.
Patiently did the pious man endure,

In faith anticipating blessedness, Already more than man in those sad

hours
When man is meanest. I sate by his side.

And pray'd with him and talk'd with him of death

And life to come. O Madoc! those were hours

Which even in anguish gave my soul a joy:

I think of them in solitude, and feel The comfort of my faith.

But when that time
Of bitterness was past and I return'd
To daily duties, no suspicious sign
Betoken'd ill; the Priests among us
came

As heretofore, and I their intercourse

Encouraged as I could, suspecting nought, 49

Nor conscious of the subtle-minded men I dealt with, how inveterate in revenge, How patient in deceit. Lincoya first

Forewarn'd me of the danger. He, thou know'st,

Had from the death of sacrifice escaped, And lived a slave among a distant tribe, When seeing us he felt a hope, that we, Lords as he deem'd us of the Elements, Might pity his poor countrymen opprest, And free them from their bondage.

Didst thou hear

How from yon bloody altars he was saved? 60

For in the eternal chain his fate and ours

Were link'd together then.

The Prince replied, I did but hear a broken tale. Tell on!

Among the Gods of you unhappy race, Tezcalipoca as the chief they rank, Or with the chief co-equal; Maker he, And Master of created things esteem'd. He sits upon a throne of trophied skulls, Hideous and huge; a shield is on his arm.

And with his black right hand he lifts, as though 70

In wrath, the menacing spear. His festival.

Of all this wicked nation's wicked rites, With most solemnity and circumstance And pomp of hellish piety, is held. From all whom evil fortune hath sub-

To their inhuman thraldom, they select Him whom they judge, for comely countenance

dued

And shapely form and all good natural gifts,

Worthiest to be the victim; and for this

Was young Lincoya chosen, being in truth 80

The flower of all his nation. For twelve months.

Their custom is, that this appointed youth

Be as the Idol's living image held. Garb'd therefore like the Demon Deity, Whene'er he goes abroad, an antic train With music and with dance attend his way;

The crowd before him fall and worship him;

And those infernal Priests who guard him then.

To be their victim and their feast at last, At morning and at evening incense him, And mock him with knee-reverence. Twenty days

Before the bloody festival arrive,

As 'twere to make the wretch in love with life,

Four maids, the loveliest of the land, are given

In spousals. With Lincoya all these rites

Duly were kept; and at the stated time, Four maids, the loveliest of the land, were his.

Of these was one, whom even at that hour

He learnt to love, so excellently good Was she; and she loved him and pitied him.

She is the daughter of an aged Priest; I oftentimes have seen her; and in truth,

Compared with Britain's maids so beautiful,

Or with the dark-eyed daughters of the South,

She would be lovely still. Her cotton vest

Falls to the knee, and leaves her olive arms

Bare in their beauty; loose, luxuriant, long,

Flow the black tresses of her glossy hair; Mild is her eye's jet lustre; and her voice!..

A soul which harbour'd evil never breathed

Such winning tones.

Thou know'st how manfully These tribes, as if insensible to pain, Welcome their death in battle, or in bonds

Defy their torturers. To Lincoya's mind

Long preparation now had made his fate Familiar; and, he says, the thought of death Broke not his sleep, nor mingled with his dreams.

Till Coatel was his. But then it woke;... It hung, . . it prest upon him like a weight

On one who scarce can struggle with the waves;

And when her soul was full of tenderness,

That thought recurring to her, she would rest

Her cheek on his and weep.

The day drew nigh;
And now the eve of sacrifice was
come. . .

What will not woman, gentle woman, dare.

When strong affection stirs her spirit up?..

She gather'd herbs, which, like our poppy, bear

The seed of sleep, and with the temple food

Mingled their power; herself partook the food,

So best to lull suspicion; and the youth, Instructed well, when all were laid asleep,

Fled far away.

After our conquering arms Had freed the Hoamen from their wretched yoke,

Lincoya needed but his Coätel

To fill his sum of earthly happiness. Her to the temple had her father's yow Awhile devoted, and some moons were

Awhile devoted, and some moons were still

To pass away, ere yet she might become A sojourner with us, Lincoya's wife, When from the Paba's wiles his watch-

ful mind 140 Foreboded ill. He bade me take good

heed,
And fear the sudden kindness of a foe.

I started at his words; . . these artful men,

Hostile at heart, as well we knew they were.

These were lip-lavish of their friendship now,

And courted confidence, while our tried friend

Yuhidthiton, estranged, a seldom guest,

Sullen and joyless, seem'd to bear at heart

Something that rankled there. These things were strange;

The omens too had ceased; .. we heard no more

Of twilight voices, nor the unholy cloud Steam'd from the morning incense. Why was this?

Young Malinal had from the hour of peace

Been our in-dweller, studious to attain Our language and our arts. To him I told

My doubts, assured of his true love and truth;

For he had learnt to understand and feel

Our holy faith, and tended like a son Cynetha's drooping age, and shared with me

His dying benediction. He, thus long Intent on better things, had been estranged 161

From Aztlan and her councils; but at this

He judged it for her welfare and for ours

Now to resume his rank; . . belike his voice

Might yet be heard, or, if the worst befel,

His timely warning save us from the snare.

But in their secret councils Malinal No longer bore a part: the Chiefs and King

Yielding blind reverence to the Pabas now.

Deluded or dismay'd. He sent to say Some treachery was design'd, and bade me charge

His brother with the crime. On that same day,

Lincoya came from Aztlan; he had found

Coatel labouring with a wretchedness She did not seek to hide; and when the youth

Reveal'd his fear, he saw her tawny

Whiten, and round his neck she clung and wept.

She told him something dreadful was at hand,

She knew not what: That, in the dead of night,

Coänocotzin at Mexitli's shrine
Had stood with all his nobles; human
blood

Had then been offer'd up, and secret

Vow'd with mysterious horror: That but late,

When to her father of the days to come She spake, and of Lincoya and her lot

Among the strangers, he had frown'd, and strove

Beneath dissembled anger to conceal Visible grief. She knew not what to fear,

But something dreadful surely was at hand, 189

And she was wretched.

When I heard these things, Yuhidthiton and the Priest Helhua Were in our dwellings. Them I call'd

apart...

There should be peace between us, I began;

Why is it otherwise?

The Priest replied, Is there not peace, Cadwallon? Seek we not

More frequent and more friendly intercourse,

Even we, the servants of our Country-Gods,

Whose worship ye have changed, and for whose sake

We were and would have been your enemies?

But as those Gods have otherwise ordain'd, 200

Do we obey. Why therefore is this doubt?

The Power who led us hither, I replied,

Over the world of waters, who hath saved,

And who will save his people, warns me now.

Then on Yuhidthiton I fix'd my eye.

Danger is near! I cried; I know it near! It comes from Aztlan.

His disorder'd cheek.

And the forced and steady boldness of

Which in defiance met the look it fear'd.

Confess'd the crime. I saw his inward shame:

Yet with a pride like angry innocence Did he make answer, I am in your hands. And you believe me treacherous! . . Kill me now !

Not so, Yuhidthiton! not 80 ! auoth I :

You were the Strangers' friend, and yet again

That wisdom may return. We are not changed: . .

Lovers of peace, we know, when danger

To make the evil on the guilty head Fall heavily and sure! With our good

And our good cause, and that Almighty

We are enough, had we no other aid, We of Caermadoc here, to put to shame Aztlan, with all her strength and all her

But even now is Madoc on the seas:

He leads our brethren here; and should he find

That Aztlan hath been false...oh! hope not then.

By force or fraud, to baffle or elude Inevitable vengeance! While ye may, Look to your choice; for we are friends or foes.

Even to your own desert.

So saving, I left The astonish'd men, whose unprovided minds Fail'd them; nor did they aim at answer

more,

But homeward went their way. Nor knew I then. . .

For this was but a thing of yesterday, . . How near the help I boasted. Now, I trust,

Thy coming shall discomfit all their Bedeck'd with tufts of grey and silvery wiles.

III. NEOLIN

Nor yet at rest, my Sister! quoth the Prince,

As at her dwelling-door he saw the Maid Sit gazing on that lovely moonlight scene:.

To bed, Goervyl. Dearest, what hast thou

To keep thee wakeful here at this late hour.

When even I shall bid a truce to thought, And lay me down in peace?.. Good night, Goervyl!

Dear sister mine, . . my own dear mother's child!

She rose, and bending on with lifted

Met the fond kiss, obedient then withdrew.

Yet could not he so lightly as he ween'd Lay wakeful thoughts aside; for he foresaw

Long strife and hard adventure to achieve.

And forms of danger vague disturb'd his dreams.

Early at morn the colonists arose; Some pitch the tent-pole, and pin down the lines

That stretch the o'er-awning canvass; to the wood

Others with saw and axe and bill for stakes.

And undergrowth to weave the wicker walls:

These to the ships, with whom Cadwallon sends

The Elk and Bison, broken to the yoke.

Ere noon Erillyab and her son arrived, To greet the Chief. She wore no longer now

The lank loose locks of careless widowhood;

Her braided tresses round her brow were bound.

plumes

Pluck'd from the eagle's pennons. She with eye

And countenance which spake no feign'd delight,

Welcomed her great deliverer. But her

Had Nature character'd so legibly, 30 That when his tongue told fair his face bewray'd

The lurking falsehood; sullen, slow of speech.

Savage, down-looking, dark, that at his words

Of welcome, Madoc in his heart conceived

Instinctive enmity.

In a happy hour Did the Great Spirit, said Erillyab,

Give bidding to the Winds to speed thee here!

For this I made my prayer; and when He sent

For the Beloved Teacher, to restore him Eyesight and youth, of him I then besought, 40

As he had been thy friend and ours on earth,

That he would intercede. . . Brother, we know

That the Great Spirit loves thee; He hath blest

Thy going and thy coming, and thy friends

Have prosper'd for thy sake; and now when first

The Powers of Evil do begin to work,
Lo! thou art here!.. Brother, we have
obeved

Thy will, and the Beloved Teacher's words

Have been our law; but now the Evil Ones

Cry out for blood, and say they are athirst, 50

And threaten vengeance. I have brought the Priest

To whom they spake in darkness... Thou art wise,

And the Great Spirit will enlighten thee; . .

We know not what to answer. . . Tell thy tale,

Neolin!

Hereat did Madoc fix upon him A searching eye; but he, no whit abash'd,

Began with firm effrontery his speech. The Feast of the Departed is at hand, And I, in preparation, on the Field

Of the Spirit pass'd the night. It came to me 60

In darkness, after midnight, when the moon

Was gone, and all the stars were blotted out;

It gather'd round me, with a noise of storms,

And enter'd into me, and I could feel It was the Snake-God roll'd and writhed within:

And I too with the inward agony,

Roll'd like a snake and writhed. Give! give! he cried:

I thirst!.. His voice was in me, and it burnt

Like fire, and all my flesh and bones were shaken;

Till, with a three which seem'd to rend
my joints
70
Asunder, he pass'd forth, and I was left
Speechless and motionless gesning for

Speechless and motionless, gasping for breath.

Then Madoe, turning to Ayayaca, Enquired, who is the man?.. The good old Priest

Replied, he hath attended from his youth

The Snake-God's temple, and received for him

His offerings, and perform'd his sacrifice, Till the Beloved Teacher made us leave The wicked way.

Hear me! quoth Neolin. With antic gesture and loud vehemence; Before this generation, and before 81 These ancient forests, . . yea, before you lake

Was hollow'd out, or one snow-feather fell

On yonder mountain-top, now never bare, . .

Before these things I was, . . where, or from whence,

I know not, . . who can tell? But then
I was,

And in the shadow of the Spirit stood; And I beheld the Spirit, and in him Saw all things, even as they were to be; And I held commune with him, not of words,

But thought with thought. Then was it given me

That I should choose my station when my hour

Of mortal birth was come, . . hunter, or chief,

Or to be mightiest in the work of war, Or in the shadow of the Spirit live,

And He in me. According to my choice,

For ever, overshadow'd by its power, I walk among mankind. At times I feel not

The burthen of his presence; then am I Like other men; but when the season comes.

Or if I seek the visitation, then

He fills me, and my soul is carried on, And then do I forelive the race of men, So that the things that will be, are to me Past.

Amalahta lifted then his eyes A moment; . . It is true, he cried; we know

He is a gifted man, and wise beyond The reach of mortal powers. Ayayaca Hath also heard the warning.

As I slept, Replied the aged Priest, upon the Field Of the Spirit, a loud voice awaken'd me,

Crying, I thirst! Give, .. give! or I will take!

And then I heard a hiss, as if a snake Were threatening at my side... But saw you nothing?

Quoth Madoc... Nothing; for the night was dark.

And felt you nothing? said the Ocean Prince.

He answered, Nothing; only sudden fear...

No inward struggle, like possession?.. None.

I thought of the Beloved Teacher's words.

And cross'd myself, and then he had no power.

Thou hast slept heretofore upon the Field,

Said Madoc; didst thou never witness voice.

Or ominous sound? Ayayaca replied, Certes the Field is holy! it receives,

All the year long, the operative power Which falleth from the sky, or from below

Pervades the earth; no harvest groweth there.

Nor tree, nor bush, nor herb, is left to spring;

But there the virtue of the elements Is gathered, till the circle of the months Be full; then, when the Priest, by

mystic rites, 131
Long vigils, and long abstinence prepared,

Goeth there to pass the appointed night alone.

The whole collected influence enters him.

Doubt not but I have felt strange impulses

On that mysterious Field, and in my dreams

Been visited; and have heard sounds in the air,

I knew not what; . . but words articulate Never till now. It was the Wicked One!

He wanted blood.

Who says the Wicked One? It was our fathers' God! cried Neolin . . Sons of the Ocean, why should we forsake

The worship of our fathers? Ye obey The White-Man's Maker; but to us was given

A different skin and speech and land and law.

The Snake-God understands the Red-Man's prayer,

And knows his wants and loves him. Shame be to us.

That since the Stranger here set foot among us,

We have let his lips be dry!

Madoc, who at Cadwallon's look repress'd

120 His answering anger. We will hold a talk

Of this hereafter. Be ye sure, mean-time,

That the Great Spirit will from Evil Powers

Protect his people. This, too, be ye sure,

That every deed of darkness shall be brought

To light, ... and woe be to the lying lips!

IV. AMALAHTA.

Soon as the coming of the fleet was known,

Had Queen Erillyab sent her hunters forth.

They from the forest now arrive, with store

Of venison; fires are built before the tents,

Where Llaian and Goervyl for their guests

Direct the feast; and now the ready board

With grateful odour steams. But while they sate

At meat, did Amalahta many a time Lift his slow eye askance, and eagerly Gaze on Goervyl's beauty; for whate'er In man he might have thought deformed or strange

Seemed beautiful in her, . . her golden curls.

Bright eyes of heavenly blue, and that clear skin.

Blooming with health and youth and happiness.

He, lightly yielding to the impulse, bent His head aside, and to Erillyab spake; Mother, said he, tell them to give to me That woman for my wife, that we may

Brethren and friends. She, in the same low tone.

Rebuked him, in her heart too well

How far unworthy he. Abash'd there-

As he not yet had wholly shaken off Habitual reverence, he sate sullenly, Brooding in silence his imagined wiles, By sight of beauty made more apt for ill; For he himself being evil, good in him Work'd evil.

And now Madoc, pouring forth The ripe metheglin, to Erillyab gave The horn of silver brim. Taste, Queen

and friend,
Said he, what from our father-land we
bring,
30

The old beloved beverage. Sparingly Drink, for it hath a strength to stir the

And trouble reason, if intemperate lips Abuse its potency. She took the horn, And sipt with wary wisdom. . . Canst thou teach us

The art of this rare beverage? quoth the Queen,

Or is the gift reserved for ye alone, By the Great Spirit, who hath favour'd

In all things above us?.. The Chief replied, 39

All that we know of useful and of good Ye also shall be taught, that we may be One people. While he spake, Erillyab pass'd

The horn to Amalahta. Sparingly!
Madoc exclaim'd; but when the savage

felt
The luscious flavour, and the poignant

He heeded nought beyond the immediate joy.

Deep did he drink, and still with clenching hands

Struggled, when from his lips, unsatisfied.

Erillyab pluck'd the horn with sharp reproof,

Chiding his stubborn wilfulness. Ere

The generous liquor flush'd him: he could feel

His blood play faster, and the joyful dance

Of animal life within him. Bolder grown,

He at Goervyl lifts no longer now

The secret glance, but gloats with greedy

Till, at the long and loathsome look abash'd,

She rose, and nearer to her brother drew,
On light pretence of speech, being half

in fear.

But he, regardless of Erillyab now,

To Madoc cried aloud, Thou art a King, And I a King!.. Give me thy sister there.

To be my wife, and then we will be friends,

And reign together.

Let me answer him, Madoc! Cadwallon cried. I better

know

Their language, and will set aside all hope,

Yet not incense the savage. . . A great thing,

Prince Amalahta, hast thou ask'd! said he.

Nor is it in Lord Madoc's power to give Or to withhold; for marriage is with us The holiest ordinance of God, whereon The bliss or bane of human life depends. Love must be won by love, and heart to heart

Link'd in mysterious sympathy, before We pledge the marriage-vow; and some there are

Who hold that, e'er we enter into life, Soul hath with soul been mated, each for each

Especially ordain'd. Prince Madoc's

Avails not, therefore, where this secret bond

Hath not been framed in Heaven.

The skilful speech Which, with wild faith and reason, thus confirm'd

Yet temper'd the denial, for a while Silenced him, and he sate in moody drams

Of snares and violence. Soon a drunken thirst.

And longing for the luscious beverage, Drove those dark thoughts aside. More drink! quoth he.

Give me the drink! . . Madoc again repeats

His warning, and again with look and voice

Erillyab chides; but he of all restraint

Impatient, cries aloud, Am I a child? Give! give! or I will take!.. Perchance ye think

I and my God alike cry out in vain!

But ye shall find us true!

Give him the horn!
Cadwallon answer'd; there will come
upon him

Folly and sleep, and then an after pain, Which may bring wisdom with it, if he

Therefrom to heed our warning. . . As thou say'st,

No child art thou!.. the choice is in thy hand;...

Drink, if thou wilt, and suffer, and in pain

Remember us.

He clench'd the horn, and swill'd The sweet intoxication copious down.

So bad grew worse. The potent draught provoked for Fierce pride and savage insolence. Ay!

It seems that I have taught ye who

The inebriate wretch exclaim'd. This land is mine,

Not hers; the kingdom and the power are mine;

I am the master!

Hath it made thee mad? Erillyab cried. . . Ask thou the Snake-God that!

Quoth he; ask Neolin and Aztlan that! Hear me, thou Son of the Waters! wilt thou have me

For friend or foe?.. Give me that woman there.

And store me with this blessed beverage, And thou shalt dwell in my domains, . . or else.

Blood! blood! The Snake-God calls for blood; the Gods

Of Aztlan and the people call for blood; They call on me, and I will give them blood.

Till they have had their fill.

Meanwhile the Queen
In wonder and amazement heard and
grief;

Watching the fiendish workings of his face,

And turning to the Prince at times, as if She look'd to him for comfort. Give him drink,

To be at peace! quoth Madoc. The

good mead

Did its good office soon; his dizzy eyes Roll'd with a sleepy swim; the joyous thrill

Died away; and as every limb relax'd, Down sunk his heavy head and down he fell.

Then said the Prince, We must rejoice in this.

O Queen and friend, that, evil though it be,

Evil is brought to light; he hath divulged

In this mad mood, what else had been conceal'd

By guilty cunning. Set a watch upon him

And on Priest Neolin; they plot against us;

Your fall and mine do they alike conspire,

Being leagued with Aztlan to destroy us both.

Thy son will not remember that his lips Have let the treason pass. Be wary then,

And we shall catch the crafty in the pit Which they have dug for us.

Erillyab cast A look of anger, made intense by grief, On Amalahta. . . Cursed be the hour Wherein I gave thee birth! she cried;

that pain 140
Was light to what thy base and brutal

nature Hath sent into my soul. . . But take

thou heed!

I have borne many a woe and many

a loss, . .

Wy father's realm the husband of my

My father's realm, the husband of my youth,

My hope in thee! . . all motherly love is gone, . .

Sufferance well nigh worn out.

When she had ceased, Still the deep feeling fill'd her, and her eve

Dwelt on him, still in thought. Brother! she cried,

As Madoc would have sooth'd her, doubt not me! 149

Mine is no feeble heart. Abundantly Did the Great Spirit overpay all woes,

And this the heaviest, when he sent thee here.

The friend and the deliverer. Evil tongues

May scatter lies; bad spirits and bad men

May league against thy life; but go thou on.

Brother He leves they and will be thy

Brother! He loves thee and will be thy shield.

V. WAR DENOUNCED

This is the day, when, in a foreign grave,

King Owen's relics shall be laid to rest.

No bright emblazonries bedeck'd his bier.

No tapers blazed, no prelate sung the mass.

No choristers the funeral dirge intoned, No mitred abbots, and no tonsured train,

Lengthen'd the pomp of ceremonious woe.

His decent bier was with white linen spread

And canopied; two elks and bisons, voked,

Drew on the car; foremost Cadwallon bore

The Crucifix; with single voice, distinct,

The good priest Llorien chaunted loud and deep

The solemn service; Madoc next the

Follow'd his father's corpse; bareheaded then

Came all the people, silently and slow.

The burial-place was in a grassy plat, A little level glade of sunny green,

Between the river and a rocky bank, Which, like a buttress, from the precipice

Of naked rock sloped out. On either side 20

'Twas skirted by the woodlands. stone cross

Stood on Cynetha's grave, sole monument,

Beneath a single cocoa, whose straight trunk

Rose like an obelisk, and waved on high

Its palmy plumage, green and never sere.

Here by Cynetha's side, with Christian prayers,

All wrongs forgotten now, was Owen laid. Rest, King of Gwyneth, in a foreign grave!

From foul indignity of Romish pride And bigot priesthood, from a falling

land 30
Thus timely snatch'd, and from the impending yoke, . .

Rest in the kingdom of thy noble son!

Ambassadors from Aztlan in the vale Awaited their return, . . Yuhidthiton, Chief of the Chiefs, and Helhua the priest;

With these came Malinal. They met the Prince.

And with a sullen stateliness return'd His salutation, then the Chief began: Lord of the Strangers, hear me! by my voice

The People and the Pabas and the King Of Aztlan speak. Our injured Gods have claim'd 41

Their wonted worship, and made manifest

Their wrath; we dare not impiously provoke

The Dreadful. Worship ye in your own way;

But we must keep the path our fathers kept.

We parted, O Yuhidthiton! as friends And brethren, said the Christian Prince; . . alas,

That this should be our meeting! When we pledged,

In the broad daylight and the eye of Heaven,

Our hands in peace, ye heard the will of God.

And felt and understood. This calm assent

Ye would belie, by midnight miracles Scared, and such signs of darkness as beseem

The Demons whom ye dread; or likelier Duped by the craft of those accursed men.

Whose trade is blood. Ask thou of thine own heart,

Yuhidthiton, . .

But Helhua broke his speech; Our bidding is to tell thee, quoth the Priest,

That Aztlan hath restored, and will maintain, 59

Her ancient faith. If it offendeth thee, Move thou thy dwelling place!

Madoc replied,
This day have I deposited in earth

My father's bones, and where his bones are laid,

There mine shall moulder.

Malinal at that Advanced; . . Prince Madoc, said the youth, I come.

True to thy faith and thee, and to the weal

Of Aztlan true, and bearing, for that truth,

Reproach and shame and scorn and obloquy.

In sorrow come I here, a banish'd man; Here take, in sorrow, my abiding place, Cut off from all my kin, from all old ties Divorced; all dear familiar countenances

No longer to be present to my sight; The very mother-language which Hearnt, A lisping baby on my mother's knees, No more with its sweet sounds to com-

fort me.
So be it! . . To his brother then he turn'd;

Yuhidthiton, said he, when thou shalt find...

As find thou wilt, . . that those accursed

Have played the juggler with thee, and deceived 80

Thine honest heart, . . when Aztlan groans in blood, . .

50 Bid her remember then, that Malinal

Is in the dwellings of her enemy: Where all his hope in banishment hath

To intercede for her, and heal her wounds.

And mitigate her righteous punishment.

Sternly and sullenly his brother heard: Yet hearken'd he as one whose heart perforce

Suppress'd its instinct, and there might

be seen

A sorrow in his silent stubbornness. 90 And now his ministers on either hand A water-vessel fill, and heap dry sedge And straw before his face, and fire the

He, looking upward, spread his arms and

cried.

Hear me, ve Gods of Aztlan, as we were, And are, and will be yours! Behold your foes!

He stoopt, and lifted up one ample

Thus let their blood be shed!..and far

He whirl'd the scattering water. Then again

Raised the full vase, . . Thus let their lives be quench'd!

And out he pour'd it on the flaming pile. The steam-cloud, hissing from the extinguish'd heap,

Spread like a mist, and ere it melted off, Homeward the heralds of the war had turn'd.

VI. THE FESTIVAL OF THE DEAD

THE Hoamen in their Council-hall are

To hold the Feast of Souls; seat above

Ranged round the circling theatre they

No light but from the central fire, whose smoke.

Slow passing through the over aperture, Excludes the day, and fills the conic roof.

And hangs above them like a cloud. Around.

The ghastly bodies of their chiefs are hung,

Shrivell'd and parch'd by heat; the humbler dead

Lie on the floor, . . white bones, exposed to view.

()n deer, or elk-skin laid, or softer fur, Or web, the work of many a mournful hour;

The loathlier forms of fresh mortality Swathed, and in decent tenderness conceal'd.

Beside each body pious gifts are laid, Mantle and belt and feathery coronal, The bow he used in war, his drinking

shell.

His arrows for the chace, the sarbacan, Through whose long tube the slender shaft, breath driven,

Might pierce the winged game. bands and wives,

Parents and children, there in death they lie;

The widow'd and the parent and the

Look on in silence. Not a sound is heard

But of the crackling brand, or mouldering fire,

Or when, amid you pendant string of shells.

The slow wind wakes a shrill and feeble sound, . .

A sound of sorrow to the mind attuned By sights of woe.

Avaváca at length Came forward:.. Spirits, is it well with ye?

Is it well, Brethren? said the aged Priest: Have ye received your mourning, and

the rites Of righteous grief? or round your

dwelling-place

Still do your shadows roam dissatisfied, And to the cries of wailing woe return

A voice of lamentation? Teach us now, If we in aught have fail'd, that I, your Priest,

When I shall join ye soon, as soon I must, May unimpeded pass the perilous floods,

And in the Country of the Dead, be hail'd

By you, with song and dance and grateful joy.

So saying, to the Oracle he turn'd, Awaiting there the silence which implied Peaceful assent. Against the eastern wall,

Fronting the narrow portal's winding way,

An Image stood: a cloak of fur disguised

The rude proportion of its uncouth limbs:

The skull of some old seer of days of old Topt it, and with a visor this was mask'd,

Honouring the oracular Spirit, who at

There took his resting place. Ayayaca Repeated, Brethren, is it well with ye? And raised the visor. But he started back,

Appall'd and shuddering; for a moony light

Lay in its eyeless sockets, and there came

From its immoveable and bony jaws

A long deep groan, thrice utter'd, and
thrice felt

In every heart of all the hearers round. The good old Priest stood tottering, like a man

Stricken with palsy; and he gazed with eyes 59

Of asking horror round, as if he look'd For counsel in that fear. But Neolin Sprung boldly to the oracle, and cried, Speak, Spirit! tell us of our sin, and teach

The atonement! A sepulchral voice replied.

Ye have for other Gods forsaken us, And we abandon you! . . and crash

with that

The Image fell.

A loud and hideous shriek,
As of a demon, Neolin set up;
So wild a yell, that, even in that hour,
It brought fresh terror to the startled
ear.

70

While yet they sate, pale and irresolute,

Helhua the Azteca came in. He bore A shield and arrow, . . symbols these of war,

Yet now beheld with hope, so great relief They felt his human presence.

is human presence.

Hoamen, hear me!

The messenger began; Erillyab, hear, Priests, Elders, People! but hear chiefly thou,

Prince Amalahta, as of these by birth, So now of years mature, the rightful Lord!..

Shall it be peace or war?.. thus Aztlan saith;

She, in her anger, from the land will

The Children of the Sea; but viewing you

In mercy, to your former vassalage Invites ye, and remits the tribute lives, And for rebellion claimeth no revenge.

Oh praise your Gods! cried Neolin, and hail

This day-spring of new hope! Aztlan remits

The tribute lives, . . what more could Madoc give?

She claimeth no revenge, and if she claimed,

He could not save. O Hoamen, bless your Gods; 90

Appease them! Thou, Prince Amalahta, speak,

And seize the mercy.

Amalahta stood In act of speech; but then Erillyab rose..

Who gives thee, Boy, this Elder's privilege?

The Queen exclaim'd; . . and thou, Priest Neolin,

Curb thou thy traitorous tongue! The reign is mine;

I hold it from my father, he from his; Age before age, beyond the memory

Of man it hath been thus. My father fell

In battle for his people, and his sons 100 Fell by his side; they perish'd, but their names

Are with the names we love, . . their happy souls

Pursue in fields of bliss the shadowy deer:

The spirit of that noble blood which ran From theirdeath-wounds, is in the ruddy clouds

Which go before the Sun, when he comes forth

In glory. Last of that illustrious race Was I, Erillyab. Ye remember well, Elders, that day when I assembled here The people, and demanded at their choice

The worthiest, to perpetuate our old line Of Kings and Warriors. . . To the wind he spread

His black and blood-red banner. Even

I hear his war drum's tripled sound, that call'd

The youth to battle; even now behold The hope which lit his dark and fiery

And kindled with a sunnier glow his cheek.

As he from yonder war-pole, in his pride, Took the death-doers down . . Lo here the bones

There should be some among ye who beheld,

When, all with arrows quill'd, and clothed with blood

As with a purple garment, he sustain'd The unequal conflict, till the Aztecas Took him at vantage, and their monarch's club

Let loose his struggling soul. Look, Hoamen, here,

See through how wide a wound his spirit fled!

Twenty long years of mournful widow-hood

Have pass'd away; so long have I maintain'd

The little empire left us, loving well 130 My people, and by them as well beloved. Say, Hoamen, am I still your Queen?

The whole assembly rose with one acclaim, . .

Still, O Erillyab, O Beloved, rule Thy own beloved people! But the Gods! Cried Amalahta, . . but the Oracle!

The Oracle! quoth she; what hath it said

That forty years of suffering hath not taught

This wretched people?.. They abandon us?..

So let them go! Where were they at that hour,

When, like a blasting night-wind in the spring,

The multitudes of Artlan came www.

The multitudes of Aztlan came upon us?

Where were they when my father went to war?

Where were they when thy father's stiffen'd corpse,

Even after death a slave, held up the

To light his conqueror's revels?.. Think not, Boy,

To palter with me thus! A fire may tremble

Within the sockets of a skull, and groans

May issue from a dead man's fleshless jaws,

And images may fall, and yet no God Be there!.. If it had walk'd abroad with life.

That had indeed been something!
Then she turn'd

Her voice toward the people. . . Ye have heard

This Priest of Aztlan, whose insidious tongue

Bids ye desert the Children of the Sea, And vow again your former vassalage. Speaks Aztlan of the former? O my people,

I too could tell ye of the former days, When yonder plain was ours, with all its woods

And waters and savannahs!.. of those days,

When, following where her husband's stronger arm

Had open'd the light glebe, the willing wife

Dropt in the yellow maize; ere long to bear

Its increase to the general store, and toss

Her flowing tresses in the dance of joy. And I could tell ye how those summer stores

Were hoarded for the invader's winter feasts:

And how the widows clipt those flowing locks

To strew them, . . not upon their husband's grave. . .

Their husbands had no graves! . . but on the rocks

And mountains in their flight. And even these rocks

And mountains could not save us! Year by year

Our babes, like firstlings of the flock, were cull'd

To be the banquet of these Aztecas!
This very wretch, who tells us of the past,
Hath chosen them for the butchery...
Oh, I thank you

For this brave anger!.. In your name I take

The war-gift!

Gods of Aztlan, Helhua cried, As to Erillyab's ready hand he gave 179 The deadly symbol, in your name I give The war-gift! Ye have thirsted over long;

Take now your fill of blood ! . . He turn'd away;

And Queen Erillyab bade the tribe fulfil Their customary rites.

Each family

Bore its own dead, and to the general grave,

With melancholy song and sob of woe, The slow procession moves. The general grave

Was delved within a deep and shady dell,

Fronting a cavern in the rock, . . the scene

Of many a bloody rite, ere Madoc came, . . 190

A temple, as they deem'd, by Nature made,

Where the Snake-Idol stood. On fur and cloth

Of woven grass, they lay their burthens down,

Within the ample pit; their offerings

Beside, and piously a portion take Of that cold earth, to which, for ever now Consign'd, they leave their fathers, dust to dust:

Sad relic that, and wise remembrancer.

But as with bark and resinous boughs they pile

The sepulchre, suddenly Neolin 200 Sprung up aloft, and shriek'd, as one who treads

Upon a viper in his heedless path.

The God! the very God! he cried, and howl'd

One long, shrill, piercing, modulated cry; Whereat from that dark temple issued

A Serpent, huge and hideous. On he came,

Straight to the sound, and curl'd around the Priest

His mighty folds innocuous, overtopping

His human height, and arching down his head, 209

Sought in the hands of Neolin for food; Then questing, rear'd and stretch'd and waved his neck,

And glanced his forky tongue. Who then had seen

The man, with what triumphant fearlessness.

lessness, Arms, thighs, and neck, and body,

wreathed and ring'd
In those tremendous folds, he stood
secure

Play'd with the reptile's jaws, and call'd for food,

Food for the present God!.. who then had seen

The fiendish joy which fired his countenance,

Might well have ween'd that he had summoned up

The dreadful monster from its native Hell, 220

By devilish power, himself a Fiend inflesh'd.

Blood for the God! he cried; Lincoya's blood!

Friend of the Serpent's foe!.. Lincoya's blood!

Cried Amalahta, and the people turn'd Their eyes to seek the victim, as if each Sought his own safety in that sacrifice. Alone Erillyab raised her voice, confused

But not confounded; she alone exclaim'd,

Madoc shall answer this! Unheard her voice 229

By the bewilder'd people, by the Priest Unheeded; and Lincoya sure had fallen The victim of their fear, had he been found

In that wild hour; but when his watchful eye

Beheld the Serpent from his den come forth.

He fled to bear the tidings... Neolin Repeats the accursed call, Food for the God!

Ayayaca, his unbelieving Priest!

At once all eager eyes were fix'd on him, But he came forward calmly at the call; Lo! here am I! quoth he; and from his head

Plucking the thin grey hairs he dealt them round...

Countrymen, kinsmen, brethren, children, take

These in remembrance of me! there will be

No relic of your aged Priest but this. From manhood to old age, full threescore years,

Have I been your true servant: fit it is That I, who witness'd Aztlan's first assault.

Should perish her last victim!.. and he moved

Towards the death. But then Erillyab Seized him, and by the garment drew him back!.. 250

By the Great Spirit, but he shall not die! The Queen exclaim'd; nor shalt thou triumph thus,

Liar and traitor! Hoamen, to your homes!

Madoc shall answer this!

Irresolute
They heard, and inobedient; to obey
Fearing, yet fearful to remain. Anon,
The Queen repeats her bidding, To your
homes,

My people! . . But when Neolin perceived

The growing stir and motion of the crowd,

As from the outward ring they moved away, 260

He utter'd a new cry, and disentangling The passive reptile's folds, rush'd out among them,

With outstretch'd hands, like one possess'd, to seize

His victim. Then they fled; for who could tell

On whom the madman, in that hellish fit.

Might cast the lot? An eight-years' boy he seized

And held him by the leg, and, whirling

In ritual dance, till breath and sense were gone.

Set up the death-song of the sacrifice. Amalahta, and what others rooted love Of evil leagued with him, accomplices In treason, join'd the death-song and

the dance.

272
Some too there were, believing what they fear'd.

Who yielded to their old idolatry,

And mingled in the worship. Round and round

The accursed minister of murder whirl'd

His senseless victim; they too round and round

In maddening motion, and with maddening cries

Revolving, whirl'd and wheel'd. At length, when now,

According to old rites, he should have dash'd 280

On the stone Idol's head the wretch's brains,

Neolin stopt, and once again began

The long, shrill, piercing, modulated cry.

The Serpent knew the call, and, rolling on.

Wave above wave, his rising length, advanced

His open jaws: then, with the expected prey,

Glides to the dark recesses of his den.

VII. THE SNAKE GOD

MEANTIME Erillyab's messenger had girt His loins, and like a roebuck, o'er the hills

He sped. He met Cadwallon and the Prince

In arms, so quickly Madoc had obey'd Lincoya's call; at noon he heard the call,

And still the sun was riding high in heaven,

When up the valley where the Hoamen dwelt

He led his twenty spears. O welcome, friend

And brother! cried the Queen. Even as thou saidst

So hath it proved; and those accursed schemes

Of treachery, which that wretched boy reveal'd

Under the influence of thy potent drink, Have ripen'd to effect. From what a snare

The timely warning saved me! for, be sure,

What I had seen I else should have believed,

In utter fear confounded. The Great Spirit,

Who taught thee to foresee the evil thing,

Will give thee power to quell it.

On they went Toward the dell, where now the Idolaters Had built their dedicated fire, and still With feast and fits of song and violent dance,

Pursued their rites. When Neolin perceived

The Prince approach, fearlessly he came forth,

And raised his arm, and cried, Strangers, away!

Away, profane! hence to your mother-land!

Hence to your waters; for the God is

He came for blood, and he shall have his

Impious, away!

Seize him! exclaim'd the Prince; Nor had he time for motion nor for flight, So instantly was that command obey'd. Hoamen, said Madoc, hear me! . . I came here,

Stranger alike to Aztlan and to you; I found ye an opprest and wretched race, Groaning beneath your chains; at your request.

For your deliverance, I unsheathed the sword.

Redeem'd ye from your bondage, and preserved

Your children from the slaughter. With those foes

Whose burthen ye for forty years endured.

This traitor hath conspired, against yourselves,

Your Queen, and me your friend; the solemn faith 40

Which in the face of yonder sun we pledged,

Each to the other, this perfidious man Hath broken, and hath stain'd his hands this day

With innocent blood. Life must atone for life:

Ere I destroy the Serpent, whom his wiles

Have train'd so well, last victim, he shall glut

The monster's maw.

Strike, man! quoth Neolin.
This is my consummation! the reward
Of my true faith! the best that I could
ask.

The best the God could give:.. to rest in him, 50

Body with body be incorporate, Soul into soul absorb'd, and I and He One life, inseparable, for evermore.

Strike, I am weary of this mortal part; Unite me to the God!

Triumphantly
He spake; the assembled people, at his
words,

With rising awe gazed on the miscreant; Madoe himself, when now he would have given

The sign for death, in admiration paused, Such power hath fortitude. And he perceived 60 The auspicious moment, and set up his cry.

Forth, from the dark recesses of the cave,

The Serpent came: the Hoamen at the sight

Shouted, and they who held the Priest, appall'd

Relax'd their hold. On came the mighty snake,

And twined, in many a wreath, round Neolin,

Darting aright, aleft, his sinuous neck, With searching eye, and lifted jaw and tongue

Quivering, and hiss as of a heavy shower Upon the summer woods. The Britons stood 70

Astounded at the powerful reptile's bulk And that strange sight. His girth was as of man,

But easily could he have overtopp'd Goliath's helmed head, or that huge King

Of Basan, hugest of the Anakim:

What then was human strength, if once involved

Within those dreadful coils? . . The multitude

Fell prone, and worshipp'd; pale Erillyab grew,

And turn'd upon the Prince a doubtful eye;

The Britons too were pale, albeit they held 80

Their spears protended; and they also look'd

On Madoc, who the while stood silently, Contemplating how wiseliest he might cope

With that surpassing strength.

But Neolin, Well hoping now success, when he had awed

The general feeling thus, exclaim'd aloud, Blood for the God! give him the Stranger's blood!

Avenge him on his foes! And then, perchance.

Terror had urged them to some desperate deed.

Had Madoc ponder'd more, or paused in act

One moment. From the sacrificial flames

He snatch'd a firebrand, and with fire and sword,

Rush'd at the monster: back the monster drew

His head upraised recoiling, and the Prince

Smote Neolin; all circled as he was, And clipt in his false Deity's embrace, Smote he the accursed Priest; the avenging sword

Fell on his neck; through flesh and bone it drove

Deep in the chest: the wretched criminal

Totter'd, and those huge rings a moment held 100

His bloody corpse upright, while Madoc struck

The Serpent: twice he struck him, and the sword

Glanced from the impenetrable scales;

Avail'd its thrust, though driven by that strong arm;

For on the unyielding skin the temper'd blade

Bent. He sprung upward then, and in the eyes

Of the huge monster flashed the fiery brand.

Impatient of the smoke and burning, back

The reptile wreathed, and from his loosening clasp

Dropt the dead Neolin, and turn'd, and fled

To his dark den.

The Hoamen, at that sight Raised a loud wonder-cry, with one accord,

Great is the Son of Ocean, and his God Is mightiest! But Erillyab silently Approach'd the great Deliverer, her

Approach'd the great Deliverer; her whole frame

Trembled with strong emotion, and she took

His hand, and gazed a moment earnestly, Having no power of speech, till with a gush

Of tears her utterance came, and she exclaim'd.

Blessed art thou, my brother! for the Of God is in thee ! . . and she would have

kissed

His hand in adoration; but he cried. God is indeed with us, and in his name Will we complete the work!.. then to the cave

Advanced, and call'd for fire. Bring fire! quoth he; By his own element the spawn of hell Shall perish! and he enter'd, to explore

The cavern depths. Cadwallon follow'd him.

Bearing in either hand a flaming brand. For sword or spear avail'd not.

Far in the hill. Cave within cave, the ample grotto pierced. Three chambers in the rock. Fit vesti-

The first to that wild temple, long and

Shut out the outward day. The second

Had its own daylight from a central

High in the hollow; here the Image

Their rude idolatry, . . a sculptured snake, . .

If term of art may such mis-shapen form

Beseem... around a human figure coil'd, And all begrimed with blood. The inmost cell

Dark; and far up within its blackest depth

They saw the Serpent's still small eye

Not if they thinn'd the forest for their

Could they, with flame or suffocating smoke.

Destroy him there; for through the open roof

The clouds would pass away. They paused not long:

Drive him beneath the chasm, Cadwallon cried.

And hem him in with fire, and from above

We crush him.

Forth they went and climb'd the hill.

With all their people. Their united strength

Loosen'd the rocks, and ranged them round the brink.

Impending. With Cadwallon on the height

Ten Britons wait: ten with the Prince descend.

And, with a firebrand each in either hand. Enter the outer cave. Madoc advanced.

And at the entrance of the inner den.

He took his stand alone. A bow he bore.

And arrows round whose heads dry tow was twined.

In pine-gum dipt; he kindled these, and shot

The fiery shafts. Upon the scaly skin, As on a rock, the bone-tipt arrows fell; But, at their bright and blazing light effray'd,

Out rush'd the reptile. Madoc from his

Retired against the side, and call'd his men.

And in they came and circled round the Snake.

And shaking all their flames, as with a wheel

Of fire, they ring'd him in. From side to side

The monster turns!.. where'er he turns, the flame

Flares in his nostrils and his blinking eyes;

Nor aught against the dreaded element Did that brute force avail, which could have crush'd

Milo's young limbs, or Theban Hercules, Or old Manoah's mightier son, ere yet Shorn of his strength. They press him now, and now

Give back, here urging, and here yielding

Till right beneath the chasm they centre him.

At once the crags are loosed, and down they fall

Thundering. They fell like thunder, but the crash

Of scale and bone was heard. In agony
The Serpent writhed beneath the blow;
in vain.

180

From under the incumbent load essay'd To drag his mangled folds. One heavier stone

Fasten'd and flatten'd him; yet still, with tail

Ten cubits long, he lash'd the air, and foined

From side to side, and raised his raging head

Above the height of man, though half his length

Lay mutilate. Who then had felt the force

Of that wild fury, little had to him

Buckler or corselet profited, or mail, Or might of human arm. The Britons shrunk

Beyond its arc of motion; but the Prince

Took a long spear, and springing on the stone

Which 6 x'd the monster down provoked

Which fix'd the monster down, provoked his rage.

Uplifts the Snake his head retorted, high

He lifts it over Madoc, then darts down To seize his prey. The Prince, with foot advanced

Inclines his body back, and points the spear

With sure and certain aim, then drives it up,

Into his open jaws; two cubits deep
It pierced, the monster forcing on the
wound.

He closed his teeth for anguish, and bit short

The ashen hilt. But not the rage which

Clangs all his scales, can from his seat dislodge

The barbed shaft: nor those contortions wild.

Nor those convulsive shudderings, nor the threes

Which shake his inmost entrails, as with the air

In suffocating gulps the monster now Inhales his own life-blood. The Prince descends; He lifts another lance; and now the Snake,

Gasping, as if exhausted, on the ground Reclines his head one moment. Madoo seized 211

That moment, planted in his eye the

Then setting foot upon his neck, drove down

Through bone and brain and throat, and to the earth

Infixed the mortal weapon. Yet once

The Snake essay'd to rise; his dying strength

Fail'd him, nor longer did those mighty folds

Obey the moving impulse, crush'd and scotch'd;

In every ring, through all his mangled length,

The shrinking muscles quiver'd, then collapsed 220 In death.

Cadwallon and his comrades now Enter the den; they roll away the

Which held him down, pluck out the mortal spear,

Then drag him forth to day; the force conjoin'd

Of all the Britons difficultly drag

His lifeless bulk. But when the Hoamen saw

That form portentous trailing in its

The jaws which, in the morning, they had seen

Purpled with human blood, now in their own

Blackening, . . aknee they fell before the Prince, 230

And in adoring admiration raised Their hands with one accord, and all in

fear
Worshipped the mighty Deicide But

Worshipped the mighty Deicide. But he,

Recoiling from those sinful honours, cried.

Drag out the Idol now, and heap the fire, That all may be consumed!

Forthwith they heap'd The sacrificial fire, and on the pile The Serpent and the Image and the corpse
Of Neolin were laid: with prompt

supply

They feed the raging flames, hour after hour,

Till now the black and nauseous smoke is spent,

And mingled with the ruins of the pile, The undistinguishable ashes lay.

Go! cried Prince Madoc, cast them in the stream,

And scatter them upon the winds, that so

No relic of this foul idolatry

Pollute the land. To-morrow meet me here,

Hoamen, and I will purify yon den
Of your abominations. Come ye here
With humble hearts; for ye, too, in the
sight

Of the Great Spirit, the Beloved One, Must be made pure, and cleansed from your offence.

And take upon yourselves his holy law.

VIII. THE CONVERSION OF THE HOAMEN

How beautiful, O Sun, is thine uprise, And on how fair a scene! Before the Cave

The Elders of the Hoamen wait the will Of their Deliverer; ranged without their ring

The tribe look on, thronging the narrow vale.

And what of gradual rise the shelving combe

Displayed, or steeper eminence of wood, Broken with crags and sunny slope of

And grassy platform. With the Elders sate

The Queen and Prince, their rank's prerogative,

Excluded else for sex unfit, and youth For counsel immature. Before the arch.

To that rude fane, rude portal, stands the Cross. By Madoc's hand victorious planted there.

And lo, Prince Madoc comes! no longer mail'd

In arms of mortal might; the spear and sword.

The hauberk and the helmet laid aside, Gorget and gauntlet, grieves and shield, . . he comes

In peaceful tunic clad, and mantle long; His hyacinthine locks now shadowing 20 That face, which late, with iron over-

brow'd, Struck from within the aventagle such

And terror to the heart. Bareheaded

he.

Following the servant of the altar, leads
The reverential train. Before them,
raised

On high, the sacred images are borne; There, in faint semblance, holiest Mary bends

In virgin beauty o'er her babe divine, . . A sight which almost to idolatry

Might win the soul by love. But who can gaze 30

[Inon that other form which on the

Upon that other form, which on the rood
In agony is stretch'd? . . his hands

transfix'd,
And lacerate with the body's pendent

weight;
The black and deadly paleness of his

Streak'd with the blood which from that

Hath ceased to flow; the side wound streaming still;

And open still those eyes, from which the look

Not yet hath pass'd away, that went to Heaven.

When, in that hour, the Son of Man exclaim'd.

Forgive them, for they know not what they do!

And now arrived before the cave, the

Halt: to the assembled Elders, where they sate

Ranged in half circle, Madoc then advanced,

And raised, as if in act to speak, his hand.

Thereat was every human sound suppress'd;

And every quicken'd ear and eager eye Were center'd on his lips.

The Prince began, . . Hoamen, friends, brethren, . . friends we have been long,

And brethren shall be, ere the day go down, . .

I come not here propounding doubtful things 50

For counsel, and deliberate resolve
Of searching thought; but with
authority

From Heaven, to give the law, and to enforce

Obedience. Ye shall worship God alone.

The One Eternal. That Beloved One Ye shall not serve with offer'd fruits, or smoke

Of sacrificial fire, or blood, or life:
Far other sacrifice he claims, . . a soul
Resign'd, a will subdued, a heart made
clean

From all offence. Not for your lots on earth, 60
Maniel or mighty slave or highly born

Menial or mighty, slave or highly-born, For cunning in the chase, or strength in war.

Shall ye be judged hereafter; . . as ye keep

The law of love, as ye shall tame your wrath,

Forego revenge, forgive your enemies, Do good to them that wrong ye, ye will find

Your bliss or bale. This law came down from Heaven.

Lo, ye behold Him there by whom it came:

The Spirit was in Him, and for the sins
Of man He suffered thus, and by His
death
70

Must all mankind be blest. Not knowing Him,

Ye wander'd on in error; knowing now,

And not obeying, what was error once Is guilt and wilful wrong. If ever more Ye bow to your false deities the knee; If ever more ye worship them with feast, Or sacrifice or dance; whoso offends Shall from among the people be cut off, Like a corrupted member, lest he taint The whole with death. With what appointed rites

Your homage must be paid, ye shall be taught;

Your children, in the way that they shall

Be train'd from childhood up. Make ye meantime,

Your prayer to that Beloved One, who sees

The secrets of all hearts; and set ye up This, the memorial of his chosen Son,

And Her, who, blessed among women, fed

The Appointed at Her breast, and by His cross

Endured intenser anguish; therefore sharing

His glory now, with sunbeams robed, the Moon 90

Her footstool, and a wreath of stars her crown.

Hoamen, ye deem us children of a

Mightier than ye, and wiser, and by Heaven

Beloved and favour'd more. From this pure law

Hath all proceeded, . . wisdom, power, whate'er

Here elevates the soul, and makes it ripe For higher powers and more exalted bliss.

Share then our law, and be with us, on earth.

Partakers of these blessings, and, in Heaven,

Co-heritors with us of endless joy. 100

Ere yet one breath or motion had disturb'd

The reverential hush, Erillyab rose.

My people, said the Queen, their God is best

And mightiest. Him to whom we offered up

Blood of our blood and of our flesh the flesh,

Vainly we deem'd divine; no spirit he Of good or evil, by the conquering arm Of Madoc mortal proved. What then remains

But that the blessing, proffer'd thus in love.

In love we take?.. Deliverer, Teacher, Friend. First in the fellowship of faith I claim

The initiatory rite.

I also, cried The venerable Priest Ayayaca, Old as I am, I also, like a child, Would learn this wisdom yet before I die.

The Elders rose and answer'd, We and

And from the congregated tribe burst forth

One universal shout, . . Great is the

Of Madoc, .. worthy to be served is He!

Then to the mountain rivulet, which roll'd Like amber over its dark bed of rock.

Did Madoc lead Erillyab, in the name Of Jesus, to his Christian family Accepted now. On her and on her son.

The Elders and the People, Llorien Sprinkled the sanctifying waters. Was scarcely two hours old when he began

His work, and when he ceased, the sun had pass'd

The heights of noon. Ye saw that blessed work,

Sons of the Cymry, Cadog, Deiniol, 130 Padarn, and Teilo! ye whose sainted names

Your monumental temples still record; Thou, David, still revered, who in the

Where, by old Hatterill's wintry torrents swoln

Rude Hodney rolls his raging stream, didst choose

Thy hermit home; and ye who by the sword

Of the fierce Saxon, when the bloodier

Urged on the work of murder, for your faith

And freedom fell, . . Martyrs and Saints. ye saw

This triumph of the Cymry and the Cross,

And struck your golden harps to hymns of jov.

IX. TLALALA

As now the rites were ended, Caradoc Came from the ships, leading an Azteca Guarded and bound. Prince Madoc, said the Bard.

Lo! the first captive of our arms I bring. Alone, beside the river I had stray'd, When, from his lurking place, the savage hurl'd

A iavelin. At the rustle of the reeds, From whence the blow was aim'd, I turn'd in time.

And heard it whizz beside me. Well it

That from the ships they saw and succour'd me;

For, subtle as a serpent in my grasp, He seemed all joint and flexure: nor had I

Armour to ward, nor weapon to offend, To battle all unused and unprepared; But I too here upon this barbarous land Like Elmur and like Aronan of old, Must lift the ruddy spear.

This is no day For vengeance, answer'd Madoc, else his

Had met no mercy. Freely let him go! Perchance the tidings of our triumph

May yet reclaim his country. . . Azteca, Go, let your Pabas know that we have crush'd

Their complots here; beneath our righteous sword

The Priest and his false Deity have fallen :

The idols are consumed, and in their

The emblems of our holy faith set up, Whereof the Hoamen have this day been made

Partakers. Say to Aztlan, when she too

Will make her temples clean, and put away

Her foul abominations, and accept 30
The Christian Cross, that Madoc then
accords

Forgiveness for the past, and peace to come.

This better part let her, of her free will And wisdom, choose in time.

Till Madoc spake,
The captive reckless of his peril stood,
Gazing with resolute and careless eye,
As one in whom the lot of life or death
Moved neither fear nor feeling; but
that eye

Now sparkling with defiance, . . Seek ye peace?

He cried: O weak and woman-hearted man!

Already wouldst thou lay the sword to rest?

Not with the burial of the sword this strife

Must end, for never doth the Tree of Peace

Strike root and flourish, till the strong man's hand

Upon his enemy's grave hath planted it. Come ye to Aztlan then in quest of peace?

Ye feeble souls, if that be what ye seek, Fly hence! our Aztlan suffers on her soil

No living stranger.

Do thy bidding, Chief!
Calmly Cadwallon answered. To her
choice 50

Let Aztlan look, lest what she now reject

In insolence of strength, she take upon her,

In sorrow and in suffering and in shame,

By strong compulsion, penitent too late. Thou hast beheld our ships with gallant men

Freighted, a numerous force, . . and for our arms, . .

Surely thy nation hath acquired of them Disastrous knowledge.

Curse upon your arms!

Exclaim'd the savage: . . Is there one
among you

Dare lay that cowardly advantage by, And meet me, man to man, in honest strife? 61

That I might grapple with him, weaponless,

On yonder rock, breast against breast, fair force

Of limb and breath and blood, . . till one, or both,

Dash'd down the shattering precipice, should feed

The mountain eagle!.. Give me, I beseech you,

That joy!

As wisely, said Cynetha's son, Thy foe might challenge thee, and bid thee let

Thy strong right hand hang idle in the fray,

That so his weakness with thy strength might cope 70

In equal battle! . . Not in wrongful war,

The tyrants of our weaker brethren, Wield we these dreadful arms, . . but

when assail'd

By fraud and force, when call'd upon to

aid The feeble and oppress'd, shall we not Then put our terrors forth, and thunder-

strike The guilty?

Silently the Savage heard; Joy brighten'd in his eyes, as they unloosed

His bonds; he stretch'd his arms at length, to feel

His liberty, and like a greyhound then Slipt from the leash, he bounded o'er the hills.

What was from early morning till noon day

The steady travel of a well-girt man, He, with fleet feet and unfatiguable.

In three short hours hath traversed; in the lake

He plunged, now shooting forth his pointed arms,

Arrow-like darting on; recumbent now, Forces with springing feet his easier way:

Then with new speed, as freshen'd by repose,

Again he breasts the water. On the

Of Aztlan now he stands, and breathes at will.

And wrings his dripping locks; then through the gate

Pursued his way.

Green garlands deck the gate: Gay are the temples with green boughs affix'd:

The door-posts and the lintels hung with wreaths:

The fire of sacrifice, with flames bedimm'd.

Burns in the sun-light, pale; the victims wait

Around, impatient of their death delay'd.

The Priest, before Tezcalipoca's shrine. Watches the maize-strewn threshold, to announce

The footsteps of the God; for this the

When to his favour'd city he vouchsafes His annual presence, and, with unseen feet.

Imprints the maize-strewn threshold: follow'd soon

By all whose altars with eternal fires Aztlan illumed, and fed with human blood;..

Mexitli, woman-born, who from the womb.

Child of no mortal sire, leapt terrible, The arm'd avenger of his mother's

And he whose will the subject winds

Quetzalcoal; and Tlaloc, Water-God, And all the host of Deities, whose power Requites with bounty Aztlan's pious zeal.

Health and rich increase giving to her

And withering in the war her enemies. So taught the Priests, and therefore were the gates

Green-garlanded, the temples green with boughs.

The door-posts and the lintels hung with wreaths:

fire,

Are destin'd, with the steam of sacrifice. To greet their dreadful coming.

With the train

Of warrior Chiefs Coanocotzin stood, That when the Priest proclaim'd the enter'd God,

His lips before the present Deity

The Might pour effectual prayer. assembled Chiefs

Saw Tlalala approach, more welcome

As one whose absence from the appointed

Had waken'd fear and wonder. . . Think not ve.

The youth exclaim'd, careless impiety Could this day lead me wandering. I went forth

To dip my javelin in the Strangers' blood, .

A sacrifice, methought, our Gods had loved

To scent, and sooner hasten'd to enjoy. I fail'd, and fell a prisoner; but their

Released me. . . coward fear, or childish hope,

That, like Yuhidthiton, I might become Their friend, and merit chastisement from Heaven,

Pleading the Strangers' cause. They bade me go

And proffer peace. . . Chiefs, were it possible

That tongue of mine could win you to that shame,

Out would I pluck the member, though mv soul

Followed its bloody roots. The Stranger

No peace in Aztlan, but the peace of death!

'Tis bravely said! Yuhidthiton replied, And fairly may'st thou boast, young Tlalala,

For thou art brave in battle. Yet 'twere well

If that same fearless tongue were taught to check

Its boyish licence now. No law forbade And yonder victims, ranged around the Our friendship with the Stranger, when my voice

Pleaded for proffered peace; that fault
I shared
I sommon with the King, and with the

Chiefs.

The Pabas and the People, none fore-

Danger or guilt: but when at length the Gods

Made evident their wrath in prodigies, I yielded to their manifested will

My prompt obedience. . . Bravely hast thou said,

And brave thou art, young Tiger of the War!

But thou hast dealt with other enemies Than these impenetrable men, . . with foes,

Whose conquered Gods lie idle in their chains, 160

And with tame weakness brook captivity.

When thou hast met the Strangers in the fight,

And in the doings of that fight out-

Yuhidthiton, revile him then for one Slow to defend his country and his faith:

Till then, with reverence, as beseems thy youth,

Respect thou his full fame!

I wrong it not! I wrong it not! I wrong it not! cried the young Azteca; But truly, as I hope to equal it,

Honour thy well-earned glory. . . But this peace! . . 170

Renounce it!.. say that it shall never be!..

Never, . . as long as there are Gods in Heaven,

Or men in Aztlan!

That, the King replied,
The Gods themselves have answer'd.
Never yet

By holier ardour were our countrymen Possess'd; peace-offerings of repentance fill

The temple courts; from every voice ascends

The contrite prayer; daily the victim's heart, 178
Sends its propitiatory steam to Heaven;

And if the aid divine may be procured

By the most dread solemnities of faith, And rigour of severest penitence,

Soon shall the present influence strengthen us,

And Aztlan be triumphant.

While they spake, The ceaseless sound of song and instrument

Rung through the air, now rising like the voice

Of angry ocean, now subsiding soft,

As when the breeze of evening dies away.

The horn, and shrill-toned pipe, and drum, that gave

Its music to the hand, and hollow'd wood, 190
Drum-like, whose thunders, ever and

anon, Commingling with the sea-shell's spiral

Closed the full harmony. And now the

Pass'd on, and, through the twilight visible,

The frequent fire-flies' brightening beauties shone.

Anxious and often now the Priest inspects

The maize-strewn threshold; for the wonted hour

Was come, and yet no footstep of the God!

More radiant now the fire of sacrifice, Fed to full fury, blazed; and its red smoke 200

Imparted to the darker atmosphere Such obscure light as, o'er Vesuvio seen,

Or pillared upon Etna's mountain-head, Makes darkness dreadful. In the captives' cheeks

Then might a livid paleness have been seen,

And wilder terror in their ghastly eyes, Expecting momently the pang of death. Soon in the multitude a doubt arose,

Which none durst mention, lest his neighbour's fears.

Divulged, should strengthen his; . . the hour was past, 210

And yet no foot had mark'd the sprinkled maize!

X. THE ARRIVAL OF THE GODS

Now every moment gave their doubts new force.

And every wondering eye disclosed the fear

Which on the tongue was trembling, when to the King,

Emaciate like some bare anatomy,

And deadly pale, Tezozomoc was led, By two supporting Priests. Ten pain-

ful months,

Immured amid the forest had he dwelt, In abstinence and solitary prayer

Passing his nights and days; thus did the Gods

From their High Priest exact, when they enforced,

By danger or distress, the penance due For public sins; and he had dwelt ten months,

Praying and fasting and in solitude, Till now might every bone of his lean

Be told, and in his starved and bony face The living eye appeared unnatural, . . A ghostly sight.

In breathless eagerness
The multitude drew round as he began...
O King, the Gods of Aztlan are not
come:

They will not come before the Strangers' blood 20

Smoke on their altars: but they have beheld

My days of prayer, and nights of watchfulness,

And fasts austere, and bloody disciplines, And have reveal'd their pleasure. Who

is here,

Who to the White King's dwelling-place dare go,

And execute their will?

Scarce had he said, When Tlalala exclaim'd, I am the man.

Hear then! Tezozomoc replied, . . Ye know

That self-denial and long penance purge The film and foulness of mortality, 30 For more immediate intercourse with Heaven

Preparing the pure spirit; and all eyes May witness that with no relaxing zeal I have perform'd my duty. Much I fear'd

For Aztlan's sins, and oft in bitterness, Have groan'd and bled for her iniquity; But chiefly for this solemn day the fear Was strong upon me, lest her Deities, Estranged, should turn away, and we be

left

A spiritless and God-abandoned race, A warning to the earth. Ten weary months

Have the raw maize and running water

My only food; but not a grain of maize Hath stay'd the gnawing appetite, nor drop

Of water cool'd my parch'd and painful tongue.

Since yester-morn arose. Fasting I pray'd,

And, praying, gash'd myself; and all night long,

I watch'd and wept and supplicated Heaven,

Till the weak flesh, its life-blood almost drain'd,

Sunk with the long austerity: a dread Of death came over me; a deathy chill Ran through my veins, and loosen'd every limb;

Dim grew mine eyes; and I could feel my heart

Dying away within me, intermit
Its slow and feeble throbs, then suddenly

Start, as it seem'd exerting all its force In one last effort. On the ground I fell, I know not if entranced, or dead indeed, But without motion, hearing, sight, or sense.

Feeling, or breath, or life. From that strange state,

Even in such blessed freedom from all pain,

That sure I thought myself in very Heaven.

I woke, and raised my eyelids, and beheld A light which seemed to penetrate my With life and health. Before me, visible, Stood Coatlantona; a wreath of flowers Circled her hair, and from their odorous leaves

Arose a lambent flame; not fitfully, Nor with faint flash or spark of earthly

From these, for ever flowing forth, there play'd 70

In one perpetual dance of pointed light, The azure radiance of innocuous fire.

She spake. . . Hear, Aztlan! and give ear, O King!

She said, Not yet the offended Gods relax

Their anger; they require the Strangers' blood,

The foretaste of their banquet. Let their will

Be known to Aztlan, and the brave perform

Their bidding; I, meantime, will seek to soothe,

With all a mother's power, Mexitli's wrath.

So let the Maidens daily with fresh flowers

Garland my temple!.. Daily with fresh

flowers
Garland her temple, Aztlan! and revere
The gentle mother of thy guardian God!

And let the brave, exclaim'd young Tlalala,

Perform her bidding! Servant of the Gods,

Declare their will!.. Is it, that I should seek

The Strangers, in the first who meets my way

To plunge the holy weapon? Say thou to me

Do this; .. and I depart to do the deed, Though my life-blood should mingle with the foe's.

O brave young Chief! Tezozomoc replied,

With better fortune may the grateful Gods

Reward thy valour! deed so hazardous
They ask not. Couldst thou from the
mountain holds

Tempt one of these rash foemen to pursue

Thine artful flight, an ambush'd band might rise

Upon the unsuspecting enemy,

And intercept his way; then hitherward

The captive should be led, and Aztlan's Gods

On their own altars see the sacrifice, 100 Well pleased, and Aztlan's sons, inspirited,

Behold the omen of assured success.

Thou know'st that Tlaloc's annual festival

Is close at hand. A Stranger's child would prove

A victim, whose rare value would deserve

His certain favour. More I need not say.

Choose thou the force for ambush; and thyself

Alone, or with a chosen comrade, seek The mountain dwellers.

Instant as he ceased, Ocellopan began; I go with thee, 110 O Tlalala! My friend!.. If one alone Could have the honour of this enterprize,

My love might yield it thee; .. but thou wilt need

A comrade. . . Tlalala, I go with thee! Whom, the Chief answer'd, should my heart select,

Its tried companion else, but thee, so oft

My brother in the battle? We will go, Shedder of blood! together will we go,

Now, ere the midnight!

Nay! the Priest replied, A little while delay, and ere ye go, 120 Devote yourselves to Heaven! Feebly he spake

Like one exhausted; gathering then new force.

As with laborious effort, he pursued, . . Bedew Mexitli's altar with your blood, And go beneath his guidage. I have

yet Strength to officiate, and to bless your

zeal.

So saying, to the Temple of the God He led the way. The warriors follow'd him:

And with his chiefs, Coanocotzin went, To grace with all solemnity the rite. 130 They pass the Wall of Serpents, and ascend

The massive fabric; four times they surround

Its ample square, the fifth they reach the height.

There, on the level top, two templetowers

Were rear'd; the one Tezcalipoca's fane,

Supreme of Heaven, where now the wily Priest

Stood, watchful for his presence, and observed

The maize-strewn threshold. His the other pile,

By whose peculiar power and patronage Aztlan was blest, Mexitli, woman-born. Before the entrance, the eternal fire 141 Was burning; bare of foot they enter'd there.

On a blue throne, with four huge silver snakes.

As if the keepers of the sanctuary, Circled, with stretching neck and fangs display'd,

Mexitli sate: another graven snake
Belted with scales of gold his monster
bulk.

Around the neck a loathsome collar hung,

Of human hearts; the face was mask'd with gold,

His specular eyes seem'd fire; one hand uprear'd 150

A club, the other, as in battle, held The shield; and over all suspended hung

The banner of the nation. They beheld In awe, and knelt before the Terrible God.

Guardian of Aztlan! cried Tezozomoc, Who to thy mortal mother hast assign'd The kingdom o'er all trees and arborets, And herbs and flowers, giving her endless life, A Deity among the Deities;

While Coatlantona implores thy love 160
To thine own people, they in fear approach

Thy aweful fane, who know no fear beside,

And offer up the worthiest sacrifice,

The blood of heroes!

To the ready Chiefs He turn'd, and said, Now stretch your arms, and make

The offering to the God. They their bare arms

Stretch'd forth, and stabb'd them with the aloe-point.

Then, in a golden vase, Tezozomoc

Received the mingled streams, and held it up 169

Toward the giant Idol, and exclaim'd, Terrible God! Protector of our realm! Receive thine incense! Let the steam of blood

Ascend to thee, delightful! So mayest thou

Still to thy chosen people lend thine aid;
And these blaspheming strangers from
the earth

Be swept away; as erst the monster

Of Mammuth, Heaven's fierce ministers of wrath,

Who drain'd the lakes in thirst, and for their food

Exterminated nations. And as when, Their dreadful ministry of death fulfill'd, Ipalnemoani, by whom we live, 181 Bade thee go forth, and with thy

lightnings fill
The vault of Heaven, and with thy

thunders rock
The rooted earth, till of the monster

race

Only their monumental bones remain'd, . .

So arm thy favour'd people with thy might,

Terrible God! and purify the land From these blaspheming foes!

He said, and gave Ocellopan the vase. . . Chiefs, ye have pour'd

Your strength and courage to the Terrible God, 190 Devoted to his service; take ye now The beverage he hath hallow'd. In your youth

Ye have quaff'd manly blood, that manly thoughts

Might ripen in your hearts; so now with this,

Which mingling from such noble veins hath flowed,

Increase of valour drink, and added force.

Ocellopan received the bloody vase,

And drank, and gave in silence to his friend

The consecrated draught; then Tlalala Drain'd off the offering. Braver blood than this

My lips can never taste! quoth he; but soon

Grant me, Mexitli, a more grateful cup,... The Stranger's life!

Are all the rites perform'd?
Ocellopan enquired. Yea, all is done,
Answer'd the Priest. Go! and the
guardian God

Of Aztlan be your guide!

They left the fane. Lo! as Tezozomoc was passing by The eternal fire, the eternal fire shot up

A long blue flame. He started; he exclaim'd.

The God! the God! Tezcalipoca's Priest 210

Echoed the welcome cry, The God! the God!

For lo! his footsteps mark the maizestrewn floor.

A mighty shout from all the multitudes Of Aztlan rose; they cast into the fire The victims, whose last shrieks of agony Mingled unheeded with the cries of joy. Then louder from the spiral sea-shell's depth

Swell'd the full roar, and from the hollow wood

Peal'd deeper thunders. Round the choral band,

The circling nobles, gay with gorgeous plumes, 220

And gems which sparkled to the mid-

And gems which sparkled to the midnight fire,

Moved in the solemn dance; each in his hand,

In measured movements lifts the feathery shield,

And shakes a rattling ball to measured sounds.

With quicker steps, the inferior chiefs without.

Equal in number, but in just array,

The spreading radii of the mystic wheel, Revolve; and, outermost, the youths roll round,

In motions rapid as their quicken'd blood.

So thus with song and harmony the night 230

Pass'd on in Aztlan, and all hearts rejoiced.

XI. THE CAPTURE

MEANTIME from Aztlan, on their enterprize,

Shedder of Blood and Tiger of the War, Ocellopan and Tlalala set forth.

With chosen followers, through the silent night.

Silent they travell'd on. After a way Circuitous and far through lonely tracks, They reach'd the mountains, and amid the shade

Of thickets covering the uncultured slope,

Their patient ambush placed. The chiefs alone

Held on, till winding in ascent they reach'd 10

The heights which o'er the Briton's mountain hold

Impended; there they stood, and by the moon

Who yet, with undiminished lustre, hung

High in the dark blue firmament, from thence

Explored the steep descent. Precipitous The rock beneath them lay, a sudden cliff

Bare and unbroken; in its midway holes,

Where never hand could reach, nor eye intrude,

The eagle built her eyrie. Farther on,

Its interrupted crags and ancient woods
Offered a difficult way. From crag to
crag, 21

By rocky shelf, by trunk, or root, or

bough,

A painful toil and perilous they pass'd; And now, stretch'd out amid the matted shrubs,

Which, at the entrance of the valley, clothed

The rugged bank, they crouch'd.

By this the stars Grew dim; the glow-worm hath put out her lamp:

The owls have ceased their night song.
On the top

()f you magnolia the loud turkey's voice Is heralding the dawn; from tree to

Extends the wakening watch-note, far and wide,

Till the whole woodlands echo with the crv.

Now breaks the morning; but as yet no foot

Hath mark'd the dews, nor sound of man is heard.

Then first Ocellopan beheld, where near, Beneath the shelter of a half-roof'd hut, A sleeping Stranger lay. He pointed him

To Tlalala. The Tiger look'd around: None else was nigh. . . Shall I descend, he said.

And strike him? here is none to see the deed.

We offered to the Gods our mingled blood Last night; and now, I deem it, they present

An offering which shall more propitiate them.

And omen sure success. I will go down And kill!

He said, and, gliding like a snake, Where Caradoc lay sleeping made his way.

Sweetly slept he, and pleasant were his

Of Britain, and the blue-eyed maid he loved.

The Azteca stood over him; he knew His victim, and the power of vengeance gave 50

Malignant joy. Once hast thou 'scaped my arm:

But what shall save thee now? the Tiger thought,

Exulting; and he raised his spear to strike.

That instant, o'er the Briton's unseen harp

The gale of morning pass'd, and swept its strings

Into so sweet a harmony, that sure

It seem'd no earthly tone. The savage

Suspends his stroke; he looks astonish'd round;

No human hand is near:.. and hark! again

The aërial music swells and dies away.

Then first the heart of Tlalala felt fear: He thought that some protecting spirit watch'd

Beside the Stranger, and, abash'd, withdrew.

A God protects him! to Ocellopan, Whispering, he said. Didst thou not hear the sound

Which enter'd into me, and fix'd my arm

Powerless above him?

Was it not a voice From thine own Gods to strengthen thee, replied

His sterner comrade, and make evident Their pleasure in the deed?

Nay! Tlalala 70 Rejoin'd; they speak in darkness and

in storms:
The thunder is their voice, that peals through heaven,

Or, rolling underneath us, makes earth

In tempest, and destroys the sons of men.

It was no sound of theirs, Ocellopan!
No voice to hearten, . . for I felt it pass
Unmanning every limb; yea, it relax'd
The sinews of my soul. Shedder of
Blood.

I cannot lift my hand against the man. Go, if thy heart be stronger!

But meantime so
So Young Caradoc arose, of his escape

Unconscious: and by this the stirring sounds

Of day began, increasing now, as all

The stately tree; some from the trunk low-laid

Hew the huge boughs: here round the fire they char

The stake-points; here they level with a line

The ground-plot, and infix the ready piles.

Or, interknitting them with osiers,

The wicker wall; others along the

From its shoal waters gather reeds and

Light roofing, suited to the genial sky. The woodman's measured stroke, the regular saw.

The wain slow-creaking and the voice

Answering his fellow, or, in single toil, Cheering his labour with a cheerful song.

Strange concert made to those fierce Aztecas,

Who, beast-like, in their silent lurking

Couch'd close and still, observant for their prev.

All overseeing, and directing all, 100 From place to place moved Madoc, and beheld

The dwellings rise. Young Hoel at his

Ran on, best pleased when at his Uncle's side

Courting indulgent love. And now they came

Beside the half-roof'd hut of Caradoc: Of all the mountain-dwellings, that the

The little boy, in boyish wantonness, Would quit his Uncle's hold, and haste away,

With childhood's frolic speed, then laugh aloud,

huts.

Now toward the entrance of the valley straits.

But wheresoe'er he turned, Ocellopan Now to their toil betake them. Some With hunter's eye pursued his heedless

> breath-suspending vigilance. Ah In

The little wretch toward his lurkingplace

Draws near, and calls on Madoc; and the Prince

Thinks of no danger nigh, and follows

The childish lure! nearer the covert

Young Hoel runs, and stops, and calls again ;

Then, like a lion, from his couching place

Ocellopan leapt forth, and seized his prey.

Loud shriek'd the affrighted child, as in his arms

The savage grasp'd him; startled at the crv.

Madoc beheld him hastening through the pass.

Quick as instinctive love can urge his

He follows, and he now almost hath reach'd

The incumber'd ravisher, and hope inspires

New speed, .. yet nearer now, and nearer still.

And lo! the child holds out his little arms !

That instant, as the Prince almost had laid

His hand upon the boy, young Tlalala Leapt on his neck, and soon, though Madoc's strength

With frantic fury shook him from his hold.

Far down the steep Ocellopan had

Ah! what avails it now, that they, by

Madoc was standing to survey their toil,

To tempt pursuit, now running to the Have miss'd their Chief, and spread the quick alarm?

What now avails it, that with distant

His gallant men come down? Regarding nought

But Hoel, but the wretched Llaian's grief.

He rushes on; and ever as he draws
Near to the child, the Tiger Tlalala
Impedes his way; and now they reach
the place

Of ambush, and the ambush'd band arise.

And Madoc is their prisoner.

Caradoc,
In vain thou leadest on the late pursuit!
In vain, Cadwallon, hath thy love
alarm'd

Caught the first sound of evil! They pour out

Tumultuous from the vale, a half-arm'd troop;

Each with such weapons as his hasty hand 150

Can seize, they rush to battle. Gallant men,

Your valour boots not! It avails not now,

With such fierce onset that ye charge the foe,

And drive with such full force the weapon home!

They, while ye slaughter them, impede

pursuit,

And far away, meantime, their comrades bear

The captive Prince. In vain his noble heart

Swells now with wild and suffocating rage;
In vain he struggles:.. they have bound

his limbs
With the tough osier, and his struggles

now 160

But hind more close and cuttingly the

But bind more close and cuttingly the band.

They hasten on; and while they bear the prize,

Leaving their ill-doom'd fellows in the fight

To check pursuit, foremost afar of all, With unabating strength by joy inspired

Ocellopan to Aztlan bears the child.

XII. HOEL

Good tidings travel fast. . . The chief is seen:

He hastens on; he holds the child on high;

He shouts aloud. Through Aztlan spreads the news:

Each to his neighbour tells the happy tale, . .

Joy, . . joy to Aztlan! the blood-shedder comes!

Tlaloc has given his victim.

Ah, poor child!
They from the gate swarm out to welcome thee,

Warriors, and men grown grey, and youths and maids,

Exulting, forth they crowd. The mothers throng

To view thee, and, while thinking of thy doom, 10 They clasp their own dear infants to the

breast With deeper love, delighted think that

Shalt suffer for them. He, poor child, admires

The strange array! with wonder he beholds

Their olive limbs, half bare, their plumy crowns,

And gazes round and round, where all was new,

Forgetful of his fears. But when the Priest

Approach'd to take him from the Warrior's arms,

Then Hoel scream'd, and from that hideous man

Averting, to Ocellopan he turn'd, 20 And would have clung to him, so dreadful late.

Stern as he was, and terrible of eye,

Less dreadful than the Priest, whose dark aspect

Which nature with her harshest characters

Had featured, art made worse. His cowl was white;

His untrimm'd hair, a long and loathsome mass, With cotton cords intwisted, clung with

And matted with the blood, which, every

He from his temples drew before the God.

In sacrifice; bare were his arms, and smear'd

Black. But his countenance a stronger dread

Than all the horrors of that outward

Struck with quick instinct to young Hoel's heart;

It was a face, whose settled sullenness No gentle feeling ever had disturb'd: Which, when he probed a victim's living breast.

Retained its hard composure.

Such was he Who took the son of Llaian, heeding not His cries and screams, and arms, in suppliant guise,

Stretch'd out to all around, and strugglings vain.

He to the temple of the Water-God Convey'd his victim. By the threshold,

The ministering Virgins stood, a comely band

Of high-born damsels, to the temple rites By pious parents yow'd. Gladly to them The little Hoel leapt; their gentle looks No fear excited; and he gazed around, Pleased and surprised, unconscious to what end

These things were tending. O'er the rush-strewn floor

They to the azure Idol led the boy, Now not reluctant, and they raised the hymn.

God of the Waters! at whose will the streams

Flow in their wonted channel, and diffuse Their plenty round, the blood and life of earth;

At whose command they swell, and o'er their banks

Burst with resistless ruin, making vain The toils and hopes of man, . . behold this child!

O strong to bless, and mighty to destroy, i

Tlaloc! behold thy victim! so mayest thou

Restrain the peaceful streams within their banks.

And bless the labours of the husbandman.

God of the Mountains! at whose will the clouds

Cluster around the heights; sendest them

To shed their fertilizing showers, and raise

The drooping herb, and o'er the thirsty

Spread their green freshness; at whose voice the hills

Grow black with storms; whose wrath the thunder speaks,

Whose bow of anger shoots the lightning shafts.

To blast the works of man: . . behold this child!

O strong to bless, and mighty to destroy, Tlaloc! behold thy victim! so mayest

Lay by the fiery arrows of thy rage, And bid the genial rains and dews descend.

O thou, Companion of the powerful

Companion and Beloved!.. when he treads

The mountain-top, whose breath diffuses round

The sweets of summer; when he rides the waves.

Whose presence is the sunshine and the calm, . .

Alauh, O green-robed Goddess, see this child !

Behold thy victim! so mayest thou appease The sterner mind of Tlaloc when he

frowns.

And Aztlan flourish in thy fostering

Young Spirits! ye whom Aztlan's piety Hath given to Tlaloc, to enjoy with him, For aye, the cool delights of Tlalocan, . . Young Spirits of the happy; who have left

Your Heaven to-day, unseen assistants here. . .

Behold your comrade! see the chosen child.

Who through the lonely cave of death must pass.

Like you, to join you in eternal joy.

Now from the rush-strewn temple they depart.

They place their smiling victim in a car. Upon whose sides of pearly shell there play'd,

Shading and shifting still, the rainbow light.

On virgin shoulders is he borne aloft. With dance before, and song and music round:

And thus they seek, in festival array, The water-side. There lies the sacred

All gay with gold, and garlanded with flowers:

The virgins with the joyous boy embark: Ten boatmen urge them on; the Priests

Follow, and all the long solemnity. The lake is overspread with boats: the

Shines on the gilded prows, the feathery crowns.

The sparkling waves. Green islets float along,

Where high-born damsels, under jasmin bowers.

Raise the sweet voice, to which the echoing oars,

In modulated motion, rise and fall. The moving multitude along the shore Flows like a stream; bright shines the unclouded sky;

Heaven, earth, and waters wear one face of joy.

Young Hoel with delight beholds the pomp;

His heart throbs joyfully; and if he thinks

Upon his mother now, 'tis but to think How beautiful a tale for her glad ear He hath when he returns. Meantime the maids

Weave garlands for his head, and raise Rose with the majesty of woods o'erthe song.

Oh! happy thou, whom early from the world

The Gods require! not by the wasting

Of sorrow canker'd, nor condemn'd to

The pang of sickness, nor the wound of war.

Nor the long miseries of protracted age: But thus in childhood chosen of the God.

To share his joys. Soon shall thy rescued soul.

Child of the Stranger! in his blissful world,

Mix with the blessed spirits; for not thine.

Amid the central darkness of the earth. To endure the eternal void : . . not thine to live.

Dead to all objects of eye, ear, or sense, In the long horrors of one endless night, With endless being curst. For thee the bowers

Of Tlalocan have blossom'd with new sweets:

For thee have its immortal trees matured The fruits of Heaven; thy comrades even now

Wait thee, impatient, in their fields of

The God will welcome thee, his chosen child.

And Alauh love thee with a mother's

Child of the Stranger, dreary is thy way! Darkness and Famine through the cave of Death

Must guide thee. Happy thou, when on that night

The morning of the eternal day shall dawn.

So as they sung young Hoel's song of death,

With rapid strength the boatmen plied their oars,

And through the water swift they glided

And now to shore they drew. The stately bank

hung,

And rocks, or peering through the forest shade,

Or rising from the lake, and with their bulk

Glassing its dark deep waters. Half way up,

A cavern pierced the rock; no human foot 150

Had trod its depths, nor ever sunbeam reach'd

Its long recesses and mysterious gloom;
To Tlaloc it was hallowed; and the stone,

Which closed its entrance, never was removed.

Save when the yearly festival return'd, And in its womb a child was sepulchred, The living victim. Up the winding

path, That to the entrance of the cavern led, With many a painful step the train

ascend:

But many a time, upon that long ascent, Young Hoel would have paused, with weariness rou

Exhausted now. They urge him on, ... poor child!

They urge him on!.. Where is Cadwallon's aid?

Where is the sword of Ririd? where the

Of Madoc now?..Oh! better had he lived.

Unknowing and unknown, on Arvon's plain,

And trod upon his noble father's grave, With peasant feet, unconscious!.. They have reach'd

The cavern now, and from its mouth the Priests

Roll the huge portal. Thitherward they force

The son of Llaian. A cold air comes out:..

It chills him, and his feet recoil; . . in vain

His feet recoil; . . in vain he turns to fly,

Affrighted at the sudden gloom that spreads

Around; ... the den is closed, and he is left

In solitude and darkness, . . left to die!

XIII. COATEL

That morn from Aztlan Coatel had gone In search of flowers, amid the woods and

crags,
To deck the shrine of Coatlantona;
Such flowers as in the solitary wilds
Hiding their modest beauty, made their
worth

More valued for its rareness. 'Twas to her

A grateful task; not only for she fled Those cruel rites, to which nor reverent use.

Nor frequent custom could familiarize Her gentle heart, and teach it to put off All womanly feeling; . . but that from all eyes

Escaped, and all obtrusive fellowship, She in that solitude might send her soul To where Lincoya with the Strangers dwelt.

She from the summit of the woodland heights

Gazed on the lake below. The sound of song

And instrument, in soften'd harmony, Had reach'd her where she stray'd; and she beheld

The pomp, and listen'd to the floating sounds,

A moment, with delight: but then a fear 20

Came on her, for she knew with what

The Tiger and Ocellopan had sought
The dwellings of the Cymry. . . Now the
boats

Drewnearer, and she knew the Stranger's child.

She watch'd them land below; she saw them wind

The ascent: . . and now from that abhorred cave

The stone is roll'd away, . . and now the child

From light and life is cavern'd. Coatel
Thought of his mother then, of all the ills
Her fear would augur, and how worse
than all
30

Which even a mother's maddening fear could feign,

His actual fate. She thought of this, and bow'd

Her face upon her knees, and closed her eyes,

Shuddering. Suddenly in the brake beside,

A rustling started her, and from the shrubs

A Vulture rose.

She moved toward the spot, Led by an idle impulse, as it seem'd, To see from whence the carrion bird had fled.

The bushes overhung a narrow chasm Which pierced the hill: upon its mossy

Shade-loving herbsand flowers luxuriant grew,

And jutting crags made easy the descent.

A little way descending, Coatel

Stoopt for the flowers, and heard, or thought she heard,

A feeble sound below. She raised her head.

And anxiously she listen'd for the sound, Not without fear. . . Feebly again, and like

A distant cry, it came; and then she thought,

Perhaps it was the voice of that poor child,

By the slow pain of hunger doom'd to die.

She shudder'd at the thought, and breathed a groan

Of unavailing pity; . . but the sound Came nearer, and her trembling heart conceived

A dangerous hope. The Vulture from that chasm

Had fled, perchance accustomed in the

To seek his banquet, and by living feet Alarm'd:.. there was an entrance then below:

And were it possible that she could save The Stranger's child, . . Oh what a joy it were

To tell Lincoya that!

It was a thought 60 Which made her heart with terror and delight Throb audibly. From crag to crag she pass'd

Descending, and beheld a narrow cave Enter the hill. A little way the light Fell, . . but its feeble glimmering she herself

Obstructed half, as stooping in she went. The arch grew loftier, and the increasing gloom

Fill'd her with more affright; and now she paused;

For at a sudden and abrupt descent She stood, and fear'd its unseen depth; her heart 70

Fail'd, and she back had hasten'd; but the cry

Reach'd her again, the near and certain cry

Of that most pitiable innocent.

Again adown the dark descent she look'd,

Straining her eyes; by this the strengthen'd sight

Had grown adapted to the gloom around, And her dilated pupils now received Dim sense of objects near. Something

below,
White, in the darkness lay: it mark'd
the depth.

Still Coatel stood dubious; but she

The wailing of the child, and his loud sobs;...

Then, clinging to the rock with fearful hands,

Her feet explored below, and twice she felt

Firm footing, ere her fearful hold relax'd.
The sound she made, along the hollow rock

Ran echoing. Hoel heard it, and he

Groping along the side. A dim, dim light

Broke on the darkness of his sepulchre; A human form drew near him; . . he sprang on,

Screaming with joy, and clung to Coatel.

And cried, O take me from this dismal place!

She answer'd not; she understood him not;

But clasp'd the little victim to her breast.

And shed delightful tears.

But from that den

Of darkness and of horror. Coatel

Durst not convey the child, though in her heart There was a female tenderness which

vearn'd.

As with maternal love, to cherish him. She hush'd his clamours, fearful lest the

Might reach some other ear; she kissed

The tears that stream'd adown his little cheeks:

She gave him food which in the morn she brought,

For her own wants, from Aztlan. Some few words

Of Britain's ancient language she had

From her Lincoya, in those happy days Of peace, when Aztlan was the Stranger's friend :

Aptly she learnt, what willingly he taught,

Terms of endearment, and the parting words

Which promised quick return. She to the child

These precious words address'd; and if it chanced

Imperfect knowledge, or some difficult sound

Check'd her heart's utterance, then the gentle tone, The fond caress, intelligibly spake

Affection's language.

But when she arose. And would have climb'd the ascent, the affrighted boy

Fast held her, and his tears interpreted The prayer to leave him not. Again she kiss'd

His tears away; again of soon return Assured and soothed him; till reluc-

And weeping, but in silence, he unloosed His grasp; and up the difficult ascent Coatel climb'd, and to the light of day Returning, with her flowers she hastened home.

XIV. THE STONE OF SACRIFICE

Who comes to Aztlan, bounding like a

Along the plain?.. The herald of suc-

For lo! his locks are braided, and his loins

Cinctured with white; and see, he lifts the shield.

And brandishes the sword. The popu-

Flock round, impatient for the tale of joy,

And follow to the palace in his path.

Joy! joy! the Tiger hath achieved his quest!

They bring a captive home! . . Triumphantly

Coanocotzin and his Chiefs go forth To greet the youth triumphant, and receive

The victim whom the gracious gods have

Sure omen and first fruits of victory. A woman leads the train, young, beauti-

More beautiful for that translucent joy Flushing her cheek, and sparkling in

her eye ; . . Her hair is twined with festal flowers, her robe

With flowing wreaths adorn'd; she holds a child,

He, too, bedeck'd and garlanded with flowers.

And, lifting him, with agile force of arm,

In graceful action, to harmonious step Accordant, leads the dance. It is the

Of Tlalala, who, with his child, goes forth To meet her hero husband.

And behold The Tiger comes! and ere the shouts and sounds

Of gratulation cease, his followers bear The captive Prince. At that so welcome sight

Loud rose the glad acclaim; nor knew they yet

That he who there lay patient in his bonds,

Expecting the inevitable lot, 30 Was Madoc. Patient in his bonds he lay,

Exhausted with vain efforts, hopeless now,

And silently resign'd. But when the King

Approach'd the prisoner, and beheld his face,

And knew the Chief of Strangers, at that sound

Electric joy shot through the multitude, And, like the raging of the hurricane, Their thundering transports peal'd.

A deeper joy,

A nobler triumph kindled Tlalala,

As, limb by limb, his eye survey'd the Prince,

With a calm fierceness. And by this the Priests

Approach'd their victim, clad in vestments white

Of sacrifice, which from the shoulders fell,

As from the breast, unbending, broad and straight,

Leaving their black arms bare. The blood-red robe,

The turquoise pendant from his down-drawn lip,

The crown of glossy plumage, whose green hue

Vied with his emerald ear-drops, mark'd their Chief

Tezozomoe: his thin and ghastly cheek, Which, . . save the temple serpents, when he brought 50

Their human banquet, . never living eye Rejoiced to see, became more ghastly now,

As in Mexitli's name, upon the Prince He laid his murtherous hand. But as he spake,

Up darted Tlalala his eagle glance...

Away! away! he shall not perish so!

The warrior cried... Not tamely, by the knife,

Nor on the jaspar-stone, his blood shall flow!

The Gods of Aztlan love a Warrior Priest!
I am their Priest to-day!

A murmuring 60 Ran through the train; nor waited he to hear

Denial thence; but on the multitude Aloud he call'd... When first our fathers seized

This land, there was a savage chief who stopt

Their progress. He had gained the rank he bore,

By long probation: stripes, which laid his flesh All bleeding bare, had forced not one

All bleeding bare, had forced not one complaint;

Not when the working bowels might be seen,

One movement; hand-bound, he had been confined

Where myriad insects on his nakedness Infix'd their venomous anger, and no start, 71

No shudder, shook his frame; last, in a net

Suspended, he had felt the agony

Of fire, which to his bones and marrow pierced,

And breathed the suffocating smoke which fill'd

His lungs with fire, without a groan, a breath,

A look betokening sense; so gallantly Had he subdued his nature. This brave man

Met Aztlan in the war, and put her Chiefs

To shame. Our Elders have not yet forgot 80

How from the slaughter'd brother of their King

He stript the skin, and form'd of it a drum,

Whose sound affrighted armies. With this man

My father coped in battle; here he led him.

An offering to the God; and, man to man,

He slew him here in fight. I was a child Just old enough to lift my father's shield;

But I remember, on that glorious day, When from the sacred combat he return'd, His red hands reeking with the hot heart's blood.

sought

The God whom he had served, to bless his boy,

And make me like my father. Men of Aztlan.

Mexitli heard his prayer : . . Here I have brought

The Stranger-Chief, the noblest sacrifice That ever graced the altar of the God; Let then his death be noble! so my boy Shall, in the day of battle, think of me; And as I follow'd my brave father's steps.

Pursue my path of glory.

Ere the Priest 100 Could frame denial, had the Monarch's

look Given his assent. . . Refuse not this, he said.

O servant of the Gods! He hath not here His arms to save him; and the Tiger's strength

Yields to no mortal might. Then for his sword

He call'd, and bade Yuhidthiton address The Stranger-Chief.

Yuhidthiton began, The Gods of Aztlan triumph, and thy blood

Must wet their altars. Prince, thou shalt not die

The coward's death; but, sworded, and in fight.

Fall as becomes the valiant. Should thine arm

Subdue in battle six successive foes. Life, liberty, and glory, will repay The noble conquest. Madoc, hope not this:

Strong are the brave of Aztlan!

Then they loosed The Ocean Chieftain's bonds; they rent away

His garments; and with songs and shouts of joy,

They led him to the Stone of Sacrifice. Round was that Stone of Blood: the half-raised arm

Of one of manly growth, who stood below.

Might rest upon its height; the circle small.

How in his arms he took me, and be- An active boy might almost bound across.

Nor needed for the combat, ampler space:

For in the centre was the prisoner's foot Fast fetter'd down. Thus fetter'd Madoc stood.

He held a buckler, light and small, of

O'erlaid with beaten gold; his sword, the King.

Honouring a noble enemy, had given, A weapon tried in war, . . to Madoc's grasp

Strange and unwieldy: 'twas a broad strong staff, Set thick with transverse stones, on

either side

Keen-edged as Syrian steel. But when he felt

The weapon, Madoc call'd to mind his deeds

Done on the Saxon in his fathers' land, And hope arose within him. Nor though now

Naked he stood, did fear for that assail His steady heart; for often had he seen His gallant countrymen with naked breasts,

Rush on their iron-coated enemy,

And win the conquest.

Now hath Tlalala 140 Array'd himself for battle. First he

A gipion, quilted close of gossampine; ()'er that a jointed mail of plates of gold, Bespotted like the tiger's speckled pride, To speak his rank; it clad his arms half-

Half-way his thighs; but cuishes had he none.

Nor gauntlets, nor feet-armour. On his helm

There yawn'd the semblance of a tiger's head,

The long white teeth extended, as for prey;

Proud crest, to blazon his proud title forth.

And now toward the fatal stage, equipp'd

For fight, he went; when, from the press behind,

A warrior's voice was heard, and clad in arms,

And shaking in his angry grasp the sword,

Occilopan rush'd on, and cried aloud, And for himself the holy combat claim'd. The Tiger, heedless of his clamour, sprung

Upon the stone, and turn'd him to the war.

Fierce leaping forward came Ocellopan, And bounded up the ascent, and seized his arm:.. 160

Why wouldst thou rob me of a deed like this?

Equal our peril in the enterprize,

Equal our merit; . . thou wouldst reap

The guerdon! Never shall my children lift

Their little hands at thee, and say, Lo!

The Chief who slew the White King!.. Tlalala,

Trust to the lot, or turn on me, and prove,

By the best chance to which the brave appeal,

Who best deserves this glory!

Stung to wrath,
The Tiger answer'd not; he raised his
sword.

And they had rush'd to battle; but the Priests

Came hastening up, and by their common Gods,

And by their common country, bade them cease

Their impious strife, and let the lot decide

From whom Mexitli should that day receive

His noble victim. Both unsatisfied, But both obedient, heard. Two equal shafts.

As outwardly they seem'd, the Paba brought;

His mantle hid their points; and Tlalala

Drew forth the broken stave. A bitter smile

Darken'd his cheek, as angrily he cast To earth the hostile lot. . . Shedder of Blood.

Thine is the first adventure! he exclaim'd;

But thou mayst perish here!.. and in his heart

The Tiger hoped Ocellopan might fall, As sullenly retiring from the stage,

He mingled with the crowd.

And now opposed In battle, on the Stone of Sacrifice, Prince Madoc and the Life-Destroyer

stood.

This clad in arms complete, free to

advance 190
In quick assault, or shun the threaten'd

blow,
Wielding his wonted sword; the other,
stript,

Save of that fragile shield, of all defence; His weapon strange and cumbrous; and pinn'd down,

Disabled from all onset, all retreat.

With looks of greedy joy, Ocellopan Survey'd his foe, and wonder'd to behold

The breast so broad, the bare and brawny limbs,

Of matchless strength. The eye of Madoc, too,

Dwelt on his foe; his countenance was calm, 200

Something more pale than wonted; like a man

Prepared to meet his death. The Azteca

Fiercely began the fight; now here, now there,

Aright, aleft, above, below, he wheel'd The rapid sword: still Madoc's rapid eye

Pursued the motion, and his ready shield,

In prompt interposition, caught the blow,

Or turn'd its edge aside. Nor did the Prince

Yet aim the sword to wound, but held it forth.

Another shield, to save him, till his hand,

Familiar with its weight and shape uncouth,

Might wield it well to vengeance. Thus he stood,

Baffling the impatient enemy, who now Wax'd wrathful, thus to waste in idle strokes

Reiterate so oft, his bootless strength.
And now yet more exasperate he grew;
For, from the eager multitude, was
heard.

Amid the din of undistinguish'd sounds, The Tiger's murmur'd name, as though they thought.

Had he been on the Stone, ere this, besure, 220

The Gods had tasted of their sacrifice, Now all too long delay'd. Then fiercelier.

And yet more rapidly, he drove the sword;

But still the wary Prince or met its fall,

And broke the force, or bent him from the blow;

And now retiring, and advancing now, As one free foot permitted, still provoked.

And baffled still the savage; and sometimes,

With cautious strength did Madoc aim attack,

Mastering each moment now with abler sway 230
The acquainted sword. But, though as

yet unharm'd

In life or limb, more perilous the strife Grew momently; for with repeated strokes,

Battered and broken now, the shield hung loose;

And shouts of triumph from the multitude

Arose, as piece-meal they beheld it fall,

And saw the Prince exposed.

That welcome sight, Those welcome sounds, inspired Ocellopan;

He felt each limb new-strung. Impatient

Of conquest long delay'd, with wilder rage 240

He drives the weapon; Madoc's lifted sword

Received its edge, and shiver'd with the blow.

A shriek of transport burst from all around:

For lo! the White King, shieldless, weaponless.

Naked before his foe! That savage foe,

Dallying with the delight of victory,

Drew back a moment to enjoy the sight,

Then yell'd in triumph, and sprang on to give

The consummating blow. Madoc beheld

The coming death; he darted up his hand 250
Instinctively to save, and caught the

wrist
In its mid fall, and drove with desperate

force
The splinter'd truncheon of his broken

sword Full in the enemy's face. Beneath his

It broke its way, and where the nasal nerves

Branch in fine fibrils o'er their mazy

Burst through, and slanting upward in the brain

Buried its jagged point.

Madoc himself Stood at his fall astonished, at escape

Unhoped, and strange success. The multitude

Beheld, and they were silent, and they stood

Gazing in terror. But far other thought. Rose in the Tiger's heart; it was a joy To Tlalala; and forth he sprung, and

The Stone of Sacrifice, and call'd aloud To bring the Prince another sword and shield,

For his last strife. Then in that interval,

Upon Ocellopan he fix'd his eyes,

Contemplating the dead, as though thereby

240 To kindle in his heart a fiercer thirst 270

For vengeance. Nor to Madoc was the sting

Of anger wanting, when in Tlalala

He knew the captive whom his mercy freed,

The man whose ambush had that day destroy'd

Young Hoel and himself; . . for, sure, he deem'd

Young Hoel was with God, and he himself

At his death day arrived. And now he graspt

A second sword, and held another shield;

And from the Stone of Blood Ocellopan Was borne away; and, fresh in arms, and fierce 280

With all that makes a savage thirst for war,

Hope, vengeance, courage, superstitious hate,

A second foe came on. By this the Prince

Could wield his weapon well; and dreading now

Lest, in protracted combat, he might stand

Again defenceless, he put forth his strength,

As oft assailing as assail'd, and watch'd So well the Tiger's motions, and received

The Tiger's blows so warily, and aimed His own so fierce and fast, that in the crowd 290

Doubt and alarm prevail'd. Ilanquel

Pale at her husband's danger; and she clasp'd

The infant to her breast, whom late she held

On high, to see his victory. The throng Of the beholders silently look'd on;

Of the beholders silently look'd on; And in their silence might at times be

An indrawn breath of terror; and the Priests

Angrily murmur'd, that in evil hour, Coanocotzin had indulged the pride

Of vaunting valour, and from certain death 300

Reprieved the foe.

But now a murmur rose
Amid the multitude; and they who
stood

So thickly throng'd, and with such eager eyes

Late watch'd the fight, hastily now broke up,

And, with disorder'd speed and sudden arms,

Ran to the city gates. More eager now,

Conscious of what had chanced, fought Tlalala;

And hope invigorated Madoc's heart; For well he ween'd Cadwallon was at hand,

Leading his gallant friends. Aright he ween'd;

At hand Cadwallon was! His gallant friends

Came from the mountains with impetuous speed,

To save or to revenge. Nor long endured

The combat now: the Priests ascend the stone,

And bid the Tiger hasten to defend

His country and his Gods; and, hand and foot,

Binding the captive Prince, they bear him thence

And lay him in the temple. Then his heart

Resign'd itself to death, and Madoc thought

Of Llaian and Goervyl: and he felt 320 That death was dreadful. But not so the King

Permitted; but not so had Heaven decreed;

For noble was the King of Aztlan's heart,

And pure his tongue from falsehood: he had said.

That by the warrior's death should Madoc die;

Nor dared the Pabas violently break The irrevocable word. There Madoc

lay 327
In solitude; the distant battle reach'd ain His ear; inactive and in bonds he lay Expecting the dread issue, and almost Wish'd for the perils of the fight again.

XV. THE BATTLE

Not unprepared Cadwallon found the sons

Of Aztlan, nor defenceless were her walls;

But when the Britons' distant march was seen,

A ready army issued from her gates, And dight themselves to battle: these the King

Coanocotzin had, with timely care,

And provident for danger, thus array'd. Forth issuing from the gates, they met the foe.

And with the sound of sonorous instruments,

And with their shouts and screams and yells, drove back 10

The Britons' fainter war-cry, as the swell Of ocean, flowing onward, up its course Repels the river-stream. Their darts and stones

Fell like the rain drops of the summershower,

So fast, and on the helmet and the shield,

On the strong corselet and the netted mail.

So innocent they fell. But not in vain The bowmen of Deheubarth sent, that day.

Their iron bolts abroad; those volant deaths

Descended on the naked multitude, 20 And through the chieftain's quilted gossampine,

Through feathery breastplate and effulgent gold,

They reach'd the life.

But soon no interval For archer's art was left, nor scope for flight

Of stone from whirling sling: both hosts, alike

Impatient for the proof of war, press on; The Aztecas, to shun the arrowy storm, The Cymry, to release their Lord, or heap

Aztlan in ruins, for his monument.

Spear against spear, and shield to shield,
and breast

To breast they met; equal in force of limb

And strength of heart, in resolute resolve, And stubborn effort of determined wrath:

The few, advantaged by their iron mail; The weaklier arm'd, of near retreat assured

And succour close at hand, in tenfold troops

Their foemen overnumbering. And of all

That mighty multitude, did every man Of either host, alike inspired by all

That stings to will and strengthens to perform, 40

Then put forth all his power; for well they knew

Aztlan that day must triumph or must fall.

Then sword and mace on helm and buckler rang,

And hurtling javelins whirr'd along the sky.

Nor when they hurled the javelin, did the sons

Of Aztlan, prodigal of weapons, loose The lance, to serve them for no second stroke:

A line of ample measure still retain'd The missile shaft; and when its blow was spent.

Swiftly the dexterous spearman coiled the string, 50

And sped again the artificer of death. Rattling, like summer hailstones, they descend,

But from the Britons' iron panoply,

Baffled and blunted, fell; nor more avail'd

The stony falchion there, whose broken edge

Inflicts no second wound; nor profited, On the strong buckler or the crested helm,

The knotty club; though fast, in blinding showers,

Those javelins fly, those heavy weapons fall

With stunning weight. Meantime with wonted strength, 60

The men of Gwyneth through their fenceless foes

Those lances thrust, whose terrors had so oft

Affray'd the Saxons, and whose homedriven points,

So oft had pierced the Normen's knightly arms.

Little did then his pomp of plumes bestead

The Azteca, or glittering pride of gold, Against the temper'd sword; little his casque,

Gay with its feathery coronal, or drest In graven terrors, when the Briton's hand

Drove in through helm and head the short-spiked mace: 70

Or swung its iron weights with shattering sway,

Which where they struck destroyed. Beneath those arms

The men of Aztlan fell; and whoso dropt

Dead or disabled, him his comrades bore Away with instant caution, lest the sight

Of those whom they had slaughter'd might inspire

The foe with hope and courage. Fast they fell,

And fast were resupplied, man after man Succeeding to the death. Nor in the town

Did now the sight of their slain countrymen, 80

Momentarily carried in and piled in heaps,

Awake one thought of fear. Hark! through the streets

Of Aztlan, how from house to house, and tower

To tower, reiterate, Paynalton's name Calls all her sons to battle! at whose name

All must go forth, and follow to the field The Leader of the Armies of the Gods, Whom, in his unseen power, Mexitli now Sends out to lead his people. They, in crowds,

Throng for their weapons to the House of Arms.

Beneath their guardian Deity preserved, Through years of peace; and there the Pabas stood Within the temple-court, and dealt around

The ablution of the Stone of Sacrifice, Bidding them, with the holy beverage, Imbibe diviner valour, strength of arm Not to be wearied, hope of victory,

And certain faith of endless joy in Heaven.

Their sure reward. . . Oh! happy, cried the Priests,

Your brethren who have fallen! already
they
they
too
Have join'd the company of blessed

Have join'd the company of blessed souls;

Already they, with song and harmony, And in the dance of beauty, are gone forth.

To follow down his western path of light Yon Sun, the Prince of Glory, from the world

Retiring to the Palace of his rest.

Oh, happy they, who for their country's cause,

And for their Gods, shall die the brave man's death!

Them will their country consecrate with praise,

Them will the Gods reward!.. They heard the Priests

Intoxicate, and from the gate swarm'd out,

Tumultuous to the fight of martyrdom.

But when Cadwallon every moment saw

The enemies increase, and with what rage Of drunken valour to the fight they rush'd,

He, against that impetuous attack,

As best he could, providing, form'd the troops

Of Britain into one collected mass: Three equal sides it offered to the foe,

Close and compact; no multitude could break

The condensed strength: its narrow point prest on,

Entering the throng's resistance, like a wedge,

Still from behind impell'd. So thought the Chief

Likeliest the gates of Aztlan might be gain'd,

And Hoel and the Prince preserved, if

the force

Of hostile thousands break that strength condensed.

Against whose iron sides the stream of

Roll'd unavailing, as the ocean waves, Which idly round some insulated rock Foam furious, warning with their

silvery smoke The mariner far off. Nor could the point Of that compacted body, though it bore Right on the foe, and with united force Press'd on to enter, through the multitude

Win now its difficult way; as where the

Pours through some strait its violent waters, swoln

By inland fresh, vainly the oarmen there With all their weight and strength essay to drive

Their galley through the pass, the stress and strain

Availing scarce to stem the impetuous stream.

And hark! above the deafening din

Another shout, heard like the thunderpeal,

Amid the war of winds! Lincoya comes, Leading the mountain-dwellers. From the shock

Aztlan recoil'd. And now a second troop Of Britons to the town advanced, for

Impatient and revenge. Cadwallon these,

With tidings of their gallant Prince enthrall'd.

Had summon'd from the ships. That dreadful tale

Roused them to fury. Not a man was

To guard the fleet; for who could have endured

That idle duty? who could have endured

The long, inactive, miserable hours, And hope and expectation and the rage

Of maddening anguish? Ririd led them

They were among mankind. Nor could In whom a brother's love had call'd not up

More spirit-stirring pain, than trembled

In every British heart; so dear to all Was Madoc. On they came; Aztlan then

Had fled appall'd; but in that dan-. gerous hour

Her faith preserved her. From the gate her Priests

Rush'd desperate out, and to the foremost rank

Forced their wild way, and fought with martvr zeal.

Through all the host contagious fury spread:

Nor had the sight that hour enabled them To mightier efforts, had Mexitli, clad In all his imaged terrors, gone before

Their way, and driven upon his enemies His giant club destroying. Then more fierce

The conflict grew; the din of arms, the

Of savage rage, the shrick of agony,

The groan of death, commingled in one

Of undistinguished horrors; while the

Retiring slow beneath the plain's far

Shed o'er the quiet hills his fading light.

XVI. THE WOMEN

SILENT and solitary is thy vale,

Caermadoc, and how melancholy now That solitude and silence! . . Broad noon-day.

And not a sound of human life is there! The fisher's net, abandon'd in his haste, Sways idly in the waters; in the tree, Where its last stroke had pierced, the

hatchet hangs:

The birds, beside the mattock and the spade,

Hunt in the new-turn'd mould, and fearlessly

Fly through the cage-work of the imperfect wall:

Or through the vacant dwelling's open door.

Pass and repass secure.

In Madoc's house. And on his bed of reeds, Goervyl lies, Her face toward the ground. She neither weeps.

Nor sighs, nor groans; too strong her agony

For outward sign of anguish, and for prayer

Too hopeless was the ill; and though, at times.

The pious exclamation pass'd her lips, Thy will be done! yet was that utterance

Rather the breathing of a broken heart, Than of a soul resign'd. Mervyn beside Hangs over his dear mistress silently, Having no hope or comfort to bestow, Noraught but sobs and unavailing tears. The women of Caermadoc, like a flock Collected in their panic, stand around The house of their lost leader; and they

Are mute in their despair. Llaian alone Is absent; wildly hath she wander'd forth

To seek her child, and such the general

That none hath mark'd her absence. Yet have they,

Though unprotected thus, no selfish fear; The sudden evil hath destroyed all thought,

All sense of present danger to themselves,

All foresight.

Yet new terrors! Malinal. Panting with speed, bursts in, and takes the arms

Of Madoc down. Goervyl, at that sound, Started in sudden hope; but when she

The Azteca, she uttered a faint scream Of wrongful fear, remembering not the proofs

Of his tried truth, nor recognizing aught

In those known features, save their hostile hue.

But he, by worser fear abating soon Her vain alarm, exclaim'd, I saw a band Of Hoamen coming up the straits, for ill,

Besure, for Amalahta leads them on. Buckle this harness on, that, being

arm'd. I may defend the entrance.

Scarce had she

Fastened the breast-plate with her trembling hands, When, flying from the sight of men in

arms. The women crowded in. Hastily he seized

The shield and spear, and on the threshold took

His stand: but, waken'd now to provident thought,

Goervyl, following, helm'd him. There was now

No time to gird the bauldric on; she

Her brother's sword, and bade him look to her

For prompt supply of weapons; herself

Being resolved not idly to abide,

Nor unprepared of hand or heart to meet

The issue of the danger, nor to die Reluctant now.

Rightly had they divined The Hoamen's felon purpose. When he

The fate of Madoc, from his mother's eye He mask'd his secret joy, and took his

And to the rescue, with the foremost band,

Set forth. But soon, upon the way, he told

The associates of his crime, that now their hour

Of triumph was arrived; Caermadoc, left

Defenceless, would become, with all its wealth,

The spoiler's easy prey, raiment and arms And iron; skins of that sweet beverage,

Which to a sense of its own life could stir

The joyful blood; the women above all,

Whom to the forest they might bear away,

To be their slaves, if so their pleasure was:

Or, yielding them to Aztlan, for such

Receive a royal guerdon. Twelve there were.

Long leagued with him in guilt, who turn'd aside:

And they have reach'd Caermadoc now, and now

Rush onward, where they see the women fly;

When, on the threshold, clad in Cimbric

And with long lance protended, Malinal Rebuffs them from the entrance. At that sight

Suddenly quail'd, they stood, as midnight thieves

Who find the master waking; but ere long,

Gathering a boastful courage, as they saw

No other guard, press'd forward, and essay'd

To turn his spear aside. Its steady point,

True to the impelling strength, held on, and thrust

The foremost through the breast, and breath and blood 90

Followed the re-drawn shaft. Nor seem'd the strife

Unequal now, though with their numbers, they

Beleaguer'd in half-ring the door, where he,

The sole defender, stood. From side to side,

So well and swiftly did he veer the lance,

That every enemy beheld its point Aim'd at himself direct. But chief on one

Had Malinal his deadly purpose fix'd, On Amalahta; by his death to quell

The present danger, and cut off the root

Of many an evil, certain else to spring From that accursed stock. On him his eye

Turn'd with more eager wilfulness, and dwelt

With keener ken; and now, with sudden step

Bending his body on, at him he drives The meditated blow: but that ill Prince,

As chiefly sought, so chiefly fearing, swerved

Timely aside; and ere the Azteca

Recovered from the frustrate aim, the spear

Was seized, and from his hold, by stress and weight

Of numbers wrench'd. He, facing still the foe,

And holding at arm's length the targe, put back

His hand, and called Goervyl, and from her

Received the sword:.. in time, for the enemy

Prest on so near, that having now no scope

To raise his arm, he drove the blade straight on.

It entered at the mouth of one who stood

With face aslant, and glanced along the teeth

Through to the ear, then, slivering downward, left

The cheek-flap dangling. He, in that same point

Of time, as if a single impulse gave Birth to the double action, dash'd his shield

Against another's head, with so fierce swing

And sway of strength, that this third enemy

Fell at his feet. Astounded by such proof

Of prowess, and by unexpected loss Dismay'd, the foe gave back, beyond the reach

Of his strong arm; and there awhile they stood.

Beholding him at bay, and counselling How best to work their vengeance upon him,

Their sole opponent. Soon did they behold

The vantage, overlook'd by hasty hope, How vulnerable he stood, his arms and thighs

Bare for their butt. At once they bent their bows:

At once ten arrows fled; seven, shot in vain,

Rung on his shield; but, with unhappier mark,

Two shafts hung quivering in his leg; a third

Below the shoulder pierced. Then Malinal

Groan'd, not for anguish of his wounds, but grief

And agony of spirit; yet resolved 140 To his last gasp to guard that precious post,

Nor longer able to endure afoot,

He, falling on his knees, received unharm'd

Upon the shield, now ample for defence, Their second shower, and still defied the foe.

But they, now sure of conquest, hasten'd on

To thrust him down, and he too felt his strength

Ebbing away. Goervyl, in that hour Of horror and despair, collected still, Caught him, and by the shoulders drew

him in; 150 And, calling on her comrades, with their

Shut to the door in time, and with their weight

Secured it, not their strength; for she

Found worthy of her noble ancestry, In this emergence felt her faculties

All present, and heroic strength of heart, To cope with danger and contempt of death.

Shame on ye, British women! shame! exclaim'd

The daughter of King Owen, as she saw The trembling hands and bloodless countenance 160

Pale as sepulchral marble; silent some; Others with womanish cries lamenting now

That ever, in unhappy hour, they left Their native land; . . a pardonable fcar;

For hark, the war-whoop! sound, whereto the howl

Of tigers or hyenas, heard at night

By captive from barbarian foes escaped, And wandering in the pathless wilderness,

Were music. Shame on ye! Goervyl cried;

Think what your fathers were, your husbands what, 170
And what your sons should be! These

savages
Seek not to wreak on ve immediat

Seek not to wreak on ye immediate death;

So are ye safe, if safety such as this

Be worth a thought; and in the interval We yet may gain, by keeping to the last This entrance, easily to be maintain'd By us, though women, against foes so few, . .

Who knows what succour chance, or timely thought

Of our own friends may send, or Providence.

Who slumbereth not?.. While thus she spake, a hand 180

In at the window came, of one who sought

That way to win the entrance. She drew out

The arrow through the arm of Malinal, With gentle care, . . the readiest weapon that. . .

And held it short above the bony barb, And, adding deeds to words, with all her might

She stabbed it through the hand. The sudden pain

Provoked a cry, and back the savage fell,

Loosening his hold, and maim'd for further war.

Nay! leave that entrance open! she exclaim'd

To one who would have closed it, . . who comes next

Shall not go thence so cheaply!.. for she now

Had taken up a spear to guard that

Easily guarded, even by female might.

O heart of proof! what now avails thy
worth

With mattock and with spade, for other

Design'd, hew now upon the door, and rend

The wattled sides; and they within shrink back.

For now it splinters through, . . and lo, the wav

Is open to the spoiler!

Then once more, Collecting his last strength, did Malinal Rise on his knees, and over him the maid Stands with the ready spear, she guarding him

Who guarded her so well. Roused to new force

By that exampled valour, and with will To achieve one service yet before he died. .

If death indeed, as sure he thought, were nigh, . .

Malinal gather'd up his fainting powers, And reaching forward, with a blow that

His body on, upon the knee he smote One Hoaman more, and brought him to the ground.

The foe fell over him; but he, prepared, Threw him with sudden jerk aside, and

Upon one hand, and with the other plunged

Between his ribs the mortal blade. Meantime

Amalahta, rushing in blind eagerness To seize Goervyl, set at nought the power

Of female hands, and stooping as he

Beneath her spear-point, thought with lifted arm

To turn the thrust aside. But she drew

And lowered at once the spear with aim so sure.

That on the front it met him, and plough'd up

The whole scalp-length. He, blinded by the blood,

Stagger'd aside, escaping by that chance A second push, else mortal. And by this,

And excellent courage? for the savage The women, learning courage from despair.

> And by Goervyl's bold example fired. Took heart, and rushing on with one accord.

> Drove out the foe. Then took they hope; for then

> They saw but seven remain in plight for

And, knowing their own number, in the pride

Of strength, caught up stones, staves, or axe, or spear,

To hostile use converting whatsoe'er The hasty hand could seize. Such

fierce attack Confused the ruffian band: nor had they room

To aim the arrow, nor to speed the spear.

Each now beset by many. But their Prince.

Still mindful of his purport, call'd to them, ...

Secure my passage while I bear away The White King's Sister: having her, the law

Of peace is in our power. . . And on he went

Toward Goervyl, and, with sudden turn, While on another foe her eye was fix'd, Ran in upon her, and stoop'd down, and claspt

The Maid above the knees, and throwing

Over his shoulder, to the valley straits Set off:..ill seconded in ill attempt; For now his comrades are too close beset

To aid their Chief, and Mervyn hath beheld

His lady's peril. At the sight, inspired With force, as if indeed that manly garb Had clothed a manly heart, the Page ran on,

And with a bill-hook striking at his ham, Cut the back sinews. Amalahta fell;

The Maid fell with him: and she first hath risen.

While, grovelling on the earth, he gnash'd his teeth

For agony. Yet, even in those pangs, Remembering still revenge, he turn'd and seized

(foervyl's skirt, and pluck'd her to the ground, 260
And roll'd himself upon her and essay'd

And roll'd himself upon her, and essay'd To kneel upon her breast; but she clench'd fast

His bloody locks, and drew him down aside,

Faint now with anguish, and with loss of blood;

And Mervyn, coming to her help again, As once again he rose, around the neck Seized him, with throttling grasp, and held him down,...

Strange strife and horrible, . . till Malinal Crawl'd to the spot, and thrust into his

groin

The mortal sword of Madoc; he himself, At the same moment, fainting, now no more 271

By his strong will upheld, the service done.

The few surviving traitors, at the sight ()f their fallen Prince and Leader, now too late

Believed that some diviner power had given

These female arms strength for their overthrow.

Themselves proved weak before them, as, of late,

Their God, by Madoc crush'd.

Away they fled Toward the valley straits; but in the gorge

Erillyab met their flight: and then her heart.

Boding the evil, smote her, and she bade Her people seize, and bring them on in bonds,

For judgement. She herself, with quicken'd pace,

Advanced, to know the worst; and o'er the dead

Casting a rapid glance, she knew her

She knew him by his garments, by the work

Of her own hands; for now his face, besmear'd

And black with gore, and stiffen'd in its pangs.

Bore of the life no semblance. . . God is good!

She cried, and closed her eyelids, and her lips 290

Shook, and her countenance changed. But in her heart

She quell'd the natural feeling. . . Bear away

These wretches!.. to her followers she exclaim'd:

And root them from the earth. Then she approach'd

Goervyl, who was pale and trembling now,

Exhausted with past effort; and she took Gently the Maiden's tremulous hand, and said.

God comfort thee, my Sister! At that voice

Of consolation, from her dreamy state Goervyl to a sense of all her woe 300 Awoke, and burst into a gush of tears. God comfort thee, my Sister! cried the Oueen.

Even as He strengthens me. I would not raise

Deceitful hope, . . but in His hand, even yet,

The issue hangs; and He is merciful.

Yea, daughter of Aberfraw, take thou hope!

For Madoc lives!.. he lives to wield the sword

Of righteous vengeance, and accomplish all.

XVII. THE DELIVERANCE

Madoc, meantime, in bonds and solitude, Lay listening to the tumult. How his heart

Panted! how then, with fruitless strength, he strove

And struggled for enlargement, as the sound

Of battle from without the city came; While all things near were still, nor foot of man

Nor voice, in that deserted part, were heard.

At length one light and solitary step
Approach'd the place; a woman cross'd
the door.

From Madoc's busy mind her image pass'd, ro
Quick as the form that caused it; but

not so

Did the remembrance fly from Coatel, That Madoc lay in bonds. That thought possess'd

Her soul, and made her, as she garlanded The fane of Coatlantona with flowers, Tremble in strong emotion.

It was now

The hour of dusk; the Pabas all were gone,

Gone to the battle; .. none could see her steps;

The gate was nigh. A momentary thought

Shot through her; she delay'd not to reflect, 20

But hasten'd to the Prince, and took the knife

Of sacrifice, which by the altar hung, And cut his bonds, and with an eager

Motioning haste and silence, to the gate She led him. Fast along the forest way, And fearfully, he follow'd to the chasm. She beckon'd, and descended, and drew

From underneath her vest, a cage, or net It rather might be called, so fine the twigs

Which knit it, where confined two fireflies gave 30

Their lustre. By that light did Madoc first

Behold the features of his lovely guide; And through the entrance of the cavern gloom

He followed in full trust.

Now have they reach'd The abrupt descent; there Coatel held forth

Her living lamp, and turning, with a smile

Sweet as good Angels wear when they present

Their mortal charge before the throne of Heaven,

She show'd where little Hoel slept below.
Poor child! he lay upon that very spot,
The last whereto his feet had followed
her;

41

And, as he slept, his hand was on the bones

Of one, who years agone had perish'd there,

There, on the place where last his wretched eyes

Could catch the gleam of day. But when the voice,

The well-known voice of Madoc, wakened him, . .

His uncle's voice, . . he started, with a scream
Which echoed through the cavern's

Which echoed through the cavern's winding length,

And stretch'd his arms to reach him. Madoc hush'd

The dangerous transport, raised him up the ascent, 50

And followed Coatel again, whose face, Though tears of pleasure still were coursing down,

Betoken'd fear and haste. Adown the wood

They went; and coasting now the lake, her eye

First what they sought beheld, a light canoe,
Moor'd to the bank. Then in her arms

she took
The child, and kiss'd him with maternal

love, And placed him in the boat; but when

the Prince,
With looks and gestures and imperfect
words

Such as the look, the gesture, well explain'd, 60

Urged her to follow, doubtfully she stood:

A dread of danger, for the thing she had done,

Came on her, and Lincoya rose to mind.

Almost she had resolved; but then the thought

Of her dear father, whom that flight would leave

Alone in age; how he would weep for her, As one among the dead, and to the grave Go sorrowing; or, if ever it were known What she had dared, that on his head the weight

Of punishment would fall. That dreadful fear 70

Resolved her, and she waved her head. and raised Her hand, to bid the Prince depart in

haste.

With looks whose painful seriousness forbade

All farther effort. Yet unwillingly, And boding evil, Madoc from the shore Push'd off his little boat. She on its way

Stood gazing for a moment, lost in thought.

Then struck into the woods.

Swift through the lake Madoc's strong arm impell'd the light canoe.

Fainter and fainter to his distant ear 80 The sound of battle came: and now the Moon

Arose in heaven, and poured o'er lake and land

A soft and mellowing ray. Along the

Llaian was wandering with distracted

And groaning for her child. She saw the boat

Approach; and as on Madoc's naked limbs.

And on his countenance, the moonbeam

And as she saw the boy in that dim light, It seem'd as though the Spirits of the

Were moving on the waters; and she stood

With open lips that breathed not, and fix'd eyes,

Watching the unreal shapes: but when the boat

Drew nigh, and Madoc landed, and she

His step substantial, and the child came

Unable then to move, or speak, or breathe.

Down on the sand she sunk.

sense.

But who can tell, Who comprehend, her agony of joy, When, by the Prince's care restored to

name

Of mother from that voice, which, sure, she thought

Had pour'd upon some Priest's remorse. less ear

Its last vain prayer for life! No tear relieved

The insupportable feeling that convulsed

Her swelling breast. She look'd, and look'd, and felt

The child, lest some delusion should have mock'd

Her soul to madness; then the gushing iov

Burst forth, and with caresses and with tears

She mingled broken prayers of thanks to heaven.

And now the Prince, when joy had had its course.

Said to her, Knowest thou the mountain path?

For I would to the battle. But at that, A sudden damp of dread came over her, . .

O leave us not! she cried; lest haply ill Should have befallen; for I remember

How in the woods I spied a savage band Making towards Caermadoc. God fore-

The evil that I fear!.. What! Madoc cried,

Were ye then left defenceless?.. She replied.

All ran to arms: there was no time for thought.

Nor counsel, in that sudden ill; nor

Of all thy people, who could, in that hour Have brook'd home-duty, when thy life or death

Hung on the chance.

Now God be merciful! Said he; for of Goervyl then he thought, And the cold sweat started at every pore. Give me the boy!.. he travels all too slow.

Then in his arms he took him, and sped

She recognized her child, she heard the Suffering more painful terrors, than of late

His own near death provoked. They held their way

In silence up the heights; and, when at length 130

They reached the entrance of the vale, the Prince

Bade her remain, while he went on to spy

The footsteps of the spoiler. Soon he saw

Men, in the moonlight, stretch'd upon the ground;

And quickening then his pace, in worse

Along the shade, with cautious step, he moved

Toward one, to seize his weapons: 'twas a corpse;

Nor whether, at the sight, to hope or fear

Yet knew he. But anon, a steady light, As of a taper, seen in his own home, 140 Comforted him; and, drawing nearer now.

He saw his sister on her knees, beside The rushes, ministering to a wounded man.

Safe that the dear one lived, then back he sped

With joyful haste, and summon'd Llaian on,

And in loud talk advanced. Erillyab

Came forward at the sound; for she had faith

To trust the voice. . . They live! they live! she cried:

God hath redeem'd them! . . Nor the Maiden yet

Believed the actual joy; like one astound,

Or as if struggling with a dream, she stood,

Till he came close, and spread his arms, and call'd

Goervyl!.. and she fell in his embrace.

But Madoc linger'd not, his eager soul Was in the war, in haste he donn'd his arms:

And as he felt his own good sword again, Exulting play'd his heart. . . Boy, he exclaim'd To Mervyn, arm thyself, and follow me! For in this battle we shall break the power

Of our blood-thirsty foe: and, in thine age, 160

Wouldst thou not wish, when young men men crowd around,

To hear thee chronicle their fathers' deeds,

Wouldst thou not wish to add, . . And I, too, fought

In that day's conflict?

Mervyn's cheek turn'd pale A moment, then, with terror all suffused, Grew fever-red. Nay, nay, Goervyl cried.

He is too young for battles!.. But the Prince,

With erring judgement, in that fearflush'd cheek

Beheld the glow of enterprizing hope, And youthful courage. I was such

a boy, 170 Sister! he cried, at Counsyllt; and that

In my first field, with stripling arm,

smote down Many a tall Saxon. Saidst thou not but

now, How bravely in the fight of yesterday, He flesh'd his sword, . . and wouldst

thou keep him here
And rob him of his glory? See his
cheek!

How it hath crimson'd at the unworthy thought!

Arm! arm! and to the battle!

How her heart
Then panted! how, with late regret,
and vain.

179

Senena wished Goervyl then had heard The secret, trembling on her lips so oft, So oft by slame withheld. She thought

that now She could have fallen upon her Lady's

neck,
And told her all; but when she saw the
Prince,

Imperious shame forbade her, and she felt

It were an easier thing to die than speak.

Avail'd not now regret or female fear!

She mail'd her delicate limbs; beneath the plate

Compress'd her bosom; on her golden locks

The helmet's overheavy load she placed; Hung from her neck the shield; and, though the sword

Which swung beside her lightest she had chosen,

Though in her hand she held the slenderest spear,

Alike unwieldy for the maiden's grasp, The sword and ashen lance. But as she touch'd

The murderous point, an icy shudder ran Through every fibre of her trembling frame:

And, overcome by womanly terror then, The damsel to Goervyl turn'd, and let The breastplate fall, and on her bosom

The Lady's hand, and hid her face, and cried.

Save me! The warrior, who beheld the act,

And heard not the low voice, with angry

Clow'd on the seemly boy of feeble heart. But, in Goervyl, joy had overpower'd The wonder; joy to find the boy she loved

Was one, to whom her heart with closer love

Might cling; and to her brother she exclaim'd,

She must not go! We women in the war Have done our parts.

A moment Madoc dwelt
On the false Mervyn, with an eye from
whence
Displeasure did not wholly pass away.
Nor loitering to resolve Love's riddle

now
To Malinal he turn'd, where, on his

couch,
The wounded youth was laid. . . True

friend, said he, And brother mine, . . for truly by that

I trust to greet thee, . . if, in this near

My hour should overtake me, . . as who knows

The lot of war? . . Goervyl hath my charge

To quite thee for thy service with herself;

That so thou mayest raise up seed to me Of mine own blood, who may inherit here

The obedience of thy people and of

Malinal took his hand, and to his lips Feebly he press'd it, saying, One boon more,

Father and friend, I ask! . . if thou shouldst meet

Yuhidthiton in battle, think of me.

XVIII. THE VICTORY

MERCIFUL God! how horrible is night Upon the plain of Aztlan! there the shout

Of battle, the barbarian yell, the bray Of dissonant instruments, the clang of

The shrick of agony, the groan of death, In one wild uproar and continuous din, Shake the still air; while, overhead, the

Regardless of the stir of this low world, Holds on her heavenly way. Still unallay'd

By slaughter raged the battle, unrelax'd By lengthened toil; anger supplying still

Strength undiminish'd for the desperate strife.

And lo! where yonder, on the temple top.

Blazing aloft, the sacrificial fire

Scene more accurst and hideous than

Displays to all the vale; for whosee'er That night the Aztecas could bear away, Hoaman or Briton, thither was he borne;

And as they stretch'd him on the stone of blood,

Did the huge tambour of the God, with voice 20
Loud as the thunder-peal, and heard as

far,

Proclaim the act of death, more visible Than in broad day-light, by those midnight fires

Distinctlier seen. Sight that with horror fill'd

The Cymry, and to mightier efforts roused.

Howbeit, this abhorr'd idolatry

Work'd for their safety; the deluded foes,

Obstinate in their faith, forbearing still The mortal stroke, that they might to the God

Present the living victim, and to him 30 Let the life flow.

And now the orient sky Glow'd with the ruddy morning, when

the Prince Came to the field. He lifted up his

voice,
And shouted Madoc! Madoc! They
who heard

The cry, astonish'd turn'd; and when they saw

The countenance his open helm disclosed.

They echoed, Madoc! Madoc! Through the host

Spread the miraculous joy, . . He lives!

He comes himself in arms!.. Lincoya heard,

As he had raised his arm to strike a foe, And stay'd the stroke, and thrust him off, and cried,

Go tell the tidings to thy countrymen, Madoc is in the war! Tell them his God Hath set the White King free! Astonish-

Seized on the Azteca; on all who heard, Amazement and dismay; and Madoc now

Stood in the foremost battle, and his sword, . .

His own good sword, . . flash'd like the sudden death

Of lightning in their eyes.

The King of Aztlan Heard and beheld, and in his noble heart 50

Heroic hope arose. Forward he moved, And in the shock of battle, front to front, Encountered Madoc. A strong-statured man

Coanocotzin stood, one well who knew The ways of war, and never yet in fight Had found an equal foe. Adown his back

Hung the long robe of feather'd royalty; Gold fenced his arms and legs; upon his helm

A sculptured snake protends the arrowy tongue;

Around a coronal of plumes arose, 60 Brighter than beam the rainbow hues of light,

Or than the evening glories which the

Slants o'er the moving many-colour'd sea,

Such their surpassing beauty; bells of gold

Emboss'd his glittering helmet, and where'er

Their sound was heard, there lay the press of war,

And Death was busiest there. Over the breast

And o'er the golden breastplate of the King,

A feathery cuirass, beautiful to eye, Light as the robe of peace, yet strong to

For the sharp faulchion's baffled edge would glide

From its smooth softness. On his arm

A buckler overlaid with beaten gold;

And so he stood, guarding his thighs and legs,

His breast and shoulders also, with the length

Of his broad shield.

Opposed, in mail complete, Stood Madoc in his strength. The flexile chains

Gave play to his full muscles, and display'd

How broad his shoulders, and his ample breast.

Small was his shield, there broadest where it fenced 80

The well of life, and gradual to a point Lessening, steel-strong, and wieldy in his grasp. It bore those blazoned eaglets, at whose sight,

Along the Marches, or where holy Dee Through Cestrian pastures rolls his tamer stream,

So oft the yeoman had, in days of yore, Cursing his perilous tenure, wound the horn,

And warden from the castle-tower rung out

The loud alarum-bell, heard far and wide.

Upon his helm no sculptured dragon sate, 90

Sate no fantastic terrors; a white plume Nodded above, far-seen, floating like

Upon the stream of battle, always where The tide ran strongest. Man to man opposed,

The Sea Lord and the King of Aztlan stood.

Fast on the intervening buckler fell The Azteca's stone faulchion. Who hath watch'd

The midnight lightnings of the summer storm,

That with their awful blaze irradiate heaven,

Then leave a blacker night? so quick, so fierce,

Flash'd Madoc's sword, which, like the serpent's tongue,

Seemed double, in its rapid whirl of light.

Unequal arms! for on the British shield Avail'd not the stone faulchion's brittle edge,

And in the golden buckler, Madoc's sword

Bit deep. Coanocotzin saw, and dropt The unprofitable weapon, and received His ponderous club, . . that club, beneath whose force,

Driven by his father's arm, Tepollomi Had fallen subdued, . . and fast and fierce he drove

The massy weight on Madoc. From his shield.

The deadening force communicated ran Up his stunn'd arm; anon upon his helm. Crashing, it came; .. his eyes shot fire, his brain

Swam dizzy, . . he recoils, . . he reels, . . again

The club descends.

That danger to himself Recall'd the Lord of Ocean. On he sprung,

Within the falling weapon's curve of death,

Shunning its frustrate aim, and breast to breast

He grappled with the King. The pliant mail

Bent to his straining limbs, while plates of gold.

The feathery robe, the buckler's amplitude

Cumbered the Azteca, and from his arm, Clench'd in the Briton's mighty grasp, at once

He dropt the impeding buckler, and let fall

The unfasten'd club; which when the Prince beheld,

He thrust him off, and drawing back resumed

The sword that from his wrist suspended

The sword that from his wrist suspended hung,

And twice he smote the King; twice from the quilt
Of plumes the iron glides: and lo! the

King, 130 So well his soldiers watch their monarch's need,

Shakes in his hand a spear.

But now a cry
Burst on the ear of Madoc, and he saw
Through opening ranks, where Urien
was convey'd

A captive to his death. Grief then and shame

And rage inspired him. With a mighty

He cleft Coanocotzin's helm; exposed
The monarch stood; . . again the
thunder-stroke

Came on him, and he fell. . . The multitude.

Forgetful of their country and themselves, 140

Crowd round their dying King. Madoc, whose eye

Still follow'd Urien, call'd upon his men, And through the broken army of the foe, Press'd to his rescue.

But far off the old man Was borne with furious speed. Ririd alone

Pursued his path, and through the thick

Close on the captors, with avenging sword.

Follow'd right on, and through the multitude,

And through the gate of Aztlan, made his way,

And through the streets, till, from the temple-mound, 150

The press of Pabas and the populace Repell'd him, while the old man was

Repell'd him, while the old man wa hurried up.

Hark! that infernal tambour! o'er the lake

Its long-loud thunders roll, and through the hills,

Awakening all their echoes. Ye accurst, Ye blow the fall too soon! Ye Dogs of Hell,

The Hart is yet at bay!.. Thus long the old man,

As one exhausted or resign'd, had lain, Resisting not; but at that knell of death,

Springing with unexpected force, he freed 160

His feet, and shook the Pabas from their hold,

And, with his armed hand, between the eyes

Smote one so sternly, that to earth he fell,

Bleeding, and all astound. A man of proof

Was Urien in his day, thought worthiest, In martial thewes and manly discipline, To train the sons of Owen. He had lost

Youth's supple slight; yet still the skill remain'd,

And in his stiffen'd limbs a strength, which yet

Might put the young to shame. And now he set

His back against the altar, resolute Not as a victim by the knife to die, But in the act of battle, as became

A man grown grey in arms: and in his heart

There was a living hope; for now he knew

That Madoc lived, nor could the struggle long

Endure against that arm.

Soon was the way Laid open by the sword; for side by side

The brethren of Aberfraw mow'd their path;

And, following close, the Cymry drive along, 180

Till on the summit of the mound their cry
Of victory rings sloud. The temple

Of victory rings aloud. The temple floor,

So often which had reek'd with innocent blood,

Reeks now with righteous slaughter. Franticly,

In the wild fury of their desperate zeal, The Priests crowd round the God, and with their knives

Hack at the foe, and call on him to save;...

At the altar, at the Idol's feet they fall. Nor with less frenzy did the multitude Flock to defend their God. Fast as they fall

they fell,

New victims rush'd upon the British
sword:

And sure that day had rooted from the earth

The Aztecas, and on their conquerors.

Promiscuous ruin, had not Madoc now Beheld from whence the fearless ardour sprang; . .

They saw Mexitli; momently they

That he would rise in vengeance. Madoc seized

A massy club, and from his azure throne Shattered the giant idol.

At that sight
The men of Aztlan pause; so was their
pause 200

Dreadful, as when a multitude expect The Earthquake's second shock. But

when they saw

Earth did not open, nor the temple fall To crush their impious enemies, dismay'd,

They felt themselves forsaken by their Gods:

Then from their temples and their homes they fled,

And, leaving Aztlan to the conqueror, Sought the near city, whither they had sent

Their women, timely saved.

But Tlalala,
With growing fury as the danger grew,
Raged in the battle; but Yuhidthiton
Still with calm courage, till no hope
remain'd,

Fronted the rushing foe. When all was vain.

When back within the gate Cadwallon's force

Resistless had compell'd them, then the Chief

Call'd on the Tiger, . . Let us bear from hence

The dead Ocellopan, the slaughter'd King:

Not to the Strangers should their bones be left,

O Tlalala!.. The Tiger wept with rage. With generous anger. To the place of death, 220

Where, side by side, the noble dead were stretch'd,

They fought their way. Eight warriors join'd their shields;

On these, a bier which well beseem'd the dead,

The lifeless Chiefs were laid. Yuhidthiton Call'd on the people, . . Men of Aztlan! yet

One effort more! Bear hence Ocellopan, Bear hence the body of your noble King! Not to the Strangers should their bones be left!

That whose heard, with wailing and loud cries.

Prest round the body-bearers; few indeed, 230

For few were they who in that fearful hour

Had ears to hear, . . but with a holy zeal, Careless of death, around the bier they ranged Their bulwark breasts. So toward the farther gate

They held their steady way, while outer-

In unabated valour, Tlalala

Faced, with Yuhidthiton, the foe's pursuit.

Vain valour then, and fatal piety,

As the fierce conquerors bore on their retreat.

If Madoc had not seen their perilous strife: 240 Remembering Malinal, and in his heart

Remembering Malinal, and in his heart Honouring a gallant foe, he call'd aloud, And bade his people cease the hot pursuit.

So, through the city gate, they bore away The dead; and, last of all their countrymen,

Leaving their homes and temples to the foe,

Yuhidthiton and Tlalala retired.

XIX. THE FUNERAL

Southward of Aztlan stood beside the Lake,

A city of the Aztecas, by name

Patamba. Thither, from the first alarm.

The women and infirm old men were sent,

And children: thither they who from the fight,

And from the fall of Aztlan, had escaped, In scatter'd bands repair'd. Their City lost,

Their Monarch slain, their Idols overthrown, . .

These tidings spread dismay; but to dismay

Succeeded horror soon, and kindling rage, 10

Horror, by each new circumstance increased,

By numbers, rage embolden'd. Lo! to the town,

Lamenting loud, a numerous train approach,

Like mountain torrents, swelling as they go.

Borne in the midst, upon the bier of shields,

The noble dead were seen. To tenfold grief

That spectacle provoked, to tenfold wrath

That anguish stung them. With their yells and groans

Curses are mix'd, and threats, and bitter vows

Of vengeance full and speedy. From the wreck 20

Of Aztlan who is saved? Tezozomoc, Chief servant of the Gods, their favoured Priest,

The voice by whom they speak: young Tlalala,

Whom even defeat with fresher glory crowns:

And full of fame, their country's rock of strength,

Yuhidthiton: him to their sovereign slain Allied in blood, mature in wisdom him, Of valour unsurpassable, by all

Beloved and honour'd, him the general voice

Acclaims their King; him they demand, to lead 30

Their gather'd force to battle, to revenge Their Lord, their Gods, their kinsmen, to redeem

Their altars and their country.

First from the nation's gratitude require The rites of death. On mats of mountain palm,

Wrought of rare texture and of richest hues,

The slaughter'd warriors, side by side, were laid;

Their bodies wrapt in many-colour'd

Of gossampine, bedeck'd with gems and gold.

The livid paleness of the countenance, A mask conceal'd, and hid their ghastly wounds.

The Pabas stood around, and one by one,

Placed in their hands the sacred aloc leaves,

With mystic forms and characters inscribed;

And as each leaf was given, Tezozomoc Address'd the dead, . . So may ye safely pass

Between the mountains, which in endless

Hurtle, with horrible uproar and frush Of rocks that meet in battle. Arm'd with this,

In safety shall ye walk along the road, 50 Where the Great Serpent from his lurid

Shoots lightning, and across the guarded way

Vibrates his tongue of fire. Receive the third,

And cross the waters where the Crocodile In vain expects his prey. Your passport this

Through the Eight Deserts; through the Eight Hills this;

And this be your defence against the Wind,

Whose fury sweeps like dust the uprooted rocks,

Whose keenness cuts the soul. Ye noble dead,

Protected with these potent amulets, 60 Soon shall your Spirits reach triumphantly

The Palace of the Sun!

The funeral train Moved to Mexitli's temple. First on high The noble dead were borne; in loud lament

Then follow'd all by blood allied to

Or by affection's voluntary ties

Attach'd more closely, brethren, kinsmen, wives.

The Peers of Aztlan, all who from the sword

Of Britain had escaped, honouring the rites,

Came clad in rich array, and bore the arms 70

And ensigns of the dead. The slaves went last,

And dwarfs, the pastime of the living chiefs,

In life their sport and mockery, and in death

Their victims. Wailing and with funeral hymns,

Mexitli's The long procession moved. Priest.

With all his servants, from the templegate

Advanced to meet the train. Two piles were built

Within the sacred court, of odorous

And rich with gums; on these, with all their robes.

Their ensigns and their arms, they laid the dead, Then lit the pile. The rapid light ran

Up flamed the fire, and o'er the darken'd

Sweet clouds of incense curl'd.

The Pabas then Perform'd their bloody office. First they slew

The women whom the slaughter'd most had loved.

Silent Who most had loved the dead. they went

Toward the fatal stone, resisting not, Nor sorrowing, nor dismay'd, but, as it seem'd.

Stunn'd, senseless. One alone there was, whose cheek

Was flush'd, whose eye was animate

Her most in life Coanocotzin prized,

By ten years' love endear'd, his counsellor,

His friend, the partner of his secret thoughts;

Such had she been, such merited to be. She as she bared her bosom to the knife. Call'd on Yuhidthiton. . . Take heed, O King!

Aloud she cried, and pointed to the Priests.

Beware these wicked men! they to the

Forced my dead Lord. . . Thou knowest, and I know,

He loved the Strangers; that his noble

Enlighten'd by their lore, had willingly Put down these cursed altars!.. As she

They dragg'd her to the stone. . . Nay! nay! she cried,

There needs not force! I go to join my Lord!

His blood and mine be on you!.. Ere she ceased.

The knife was in her breast. Tezozomoc, Trembling with rage, held up toward the

Her reeking heart.

The dwarfs and slaves died last. That bloody office done, they gathered

The ashes of the dead, and coffer'd them Apart: the teeth with them, which unconsumed

Among the ashes lay, a single lock

Shorn from the corpse, and his lipemerald

Now held to be the Spirit's flawless heart, In better worlds. The Priest then held on high

The little ark which shrined his last remains.

And call'd upon the people; . . Aztecas, This was your King, the bountiful, the brave.

Coanocotzin! Men of Aztlan, hold

His memory holy! learn from him to

Your country and your Gods; for them to live

Like him, like him to die. So from you Heaven.

Where in the Spring of Light his Spirit bathes.

Often shall he descend; hover above On evening clouds, or plumed with rain bow wings.

Sip honey from the flowers, and warble

Honour his memory! emulate his worth! So saying, in the temple-tower he laid The relics of the King.

These duties done, The living claim their care. His birth, his deeds,

The general love, the general voice, have mark'd

Yuhidthiton for King. Bare-headed, barc

Of foot, of limb, scarfed only round the

The Chieftain to Mexitli's temple moved And knelt before the God. Tezozomoc King over Aztlan there anointed him, And over him, from hallowed cedarbranch.

Sprinkled the holy water. Then the Priest

In a black garment robed him, figured

With skulls and bones, a garb to emblem Slaughter, and ruin, his imperial tasks. Next in his hand the Priest a censer

placed:

And while he knelt, directing to the God The steaming incense, thus address'd the

Chosen by the people, by the Gods approved,

Swear to protect thy subjects, to main-

The worship of thy fathers, to observe Their laws, to make the Sun pursue his course,

The clouds descend in rain, the rivers hold

Their wonted channels, and the fruits of earth

To ripen in their season; Swear, O King! And prosper, as thou holdest good thine

He raised his voice, and swore. Then on his brow

Tezozomoc the crown of Aztlan placed; And in the robe of emblem'd royalty, Preceded by the golden wands of state, Yuhidthiton went forth, anointed King.

XX. THE DEATH OF COATEL

WHEN now the multitude beheld their King,

In gratulations of reiterate joy

They shout his name, and bid him lead them on

To vengeance. But to answer that appeal

Tezozomoc advanced. . . Oh! go not forth.

Cried the Chief Paba, till the land be purged

on.

While there is guilt in Aztlan. Let the Priests

Who from the ruined city have escaped, And all who in her temples have perform'd

The ennobling service of her injured Gods.

Gather together now.

He spake; the train Assembled, priests and matrons, youths and maids.

Servants of Heaven! aloud the Arch-Priest began.

The Gods had favour'd Aztlan: bound for death

The White King lay: our countrymen were strong

In battle, and the conquest had been ours, . .

I speak not from myself, but as the Powers,

Whose voice on earth I am, impel the truth, . .

The conquest had been ours: but treason lurk'd

In Aztlan, treason and foul sacrilege; And therefore were her children in the

Of need abandon'd; therefore were her youth

Cut down, her altars therefore overthrown.

The White King, whom ye saw upon the Stone

Of Sacrifice, and whom ye held in bonds, Stood in the foremost fight and slew vour Lord.

Not by a God, O Aztecas, enlarged

Broke he his bondage! by a mortal hand, An impious, sacrilegious, traitorous hand,

Your city was betray'd, your King was slain,

Your shrines polluted. The insulted Power,

He who is terrible, beheld the deed. And now he calls for vengeance.

Stern he spake, And from Mexitli's altar bade the Priest Bring forth the sacred water. In his hand

From her offence! No God will lead ye He took the vase, and held it up, and cried.

Accurst be he who did this deed! Accurst

The father who begat him, and the breast

At which he fed! Death be his portion now.

Eternal infamy his lot on earth,

His doom eternal horrors! Let his name From sire to son, be in the people's mouth,

Through every generation! Let a curse Of deep and pious and effectual hate For ever follow the detested name; And every curse inflict upon his soul A stab of mortal anguish.

Then he gave
The vase. . . Drink one by one! the
innocent

Boldly; on them the water hath no power; 50

But let the guilty tremble! it shall flow

A draught of agony and death to him, A stream of fiery poison.

Coatel!

What were thy horrors when the fatal

Pass'd to thy trial,.. when Tezozomoc Fix'd his keen eye on thee! A deathiness Came over her,.. her blood ran back,.. her joints

Shook like the palsy, and the dreadful

Dropt from her conscious hold. The Priest exclaim'd.

The hand of God! the avenger manifest!

Drag her to the altar!.. At that sound
of death

61

The life forsook her limbs, and down she fell.

Senseless. They dragg'd her to the Stone of Blood.

All senseless as she lay; . . in that dread hour

Nature was kind.

Tezozomoc then cried, Bring forth the kindred of this wretch accurst,

Priest

Came forth and answered, There is none but I,

The father of the dead.

To death with him!

Exclaim'd Tezozomoe; to death with him;

And purify the nation!.. But the King Permitted not that crime... Chief of the Priests.

If he be guilty, let the guilty bleed, Said he; but never, while I live and

The innocent shall suffer. Hear him speak!

Hear me! the old man replied. That fatal day

I never saw my child. At morn she left The city, seeking flowers to dress the shrine

Of Coatlantona; and that at eve

I stood among the Pabas in the gate, 80 Blessing our soldiers, as they issued out, Let them who saw bear witness. . . Two came forth,

And testified Aculhua spake the words Of truth.

Full well I know, the old man pursued,

My daughter loved the Strangers, that her heart

Was not with Aztlan; but not I the cause!

Ye all remember how the Maid was given, . .

She being, in truth, of all our Maids the flower, . .

In spousals to Lincoya, him who fled From sacrifice. It was a misery 90 For me to see my only child condemn'd In early widowhood to waste her youth, My only and my beautifullest girl!

Chief of the Priests, you order'd; I obeyed.

Not mine the fault, if when Lincoya fled, And fought among the enemies, her heart Was with her husband.

He is innocent!
He shall not die! Yuhidthiton exclaim'd.

Nay, King Yuhidthiton! Aculhua cried, I merit death. My country over-thrown,

My daughter slain, alike demand on me That justice. When her years of ministry

My selfish love, still suffer'd her to give Her youth to me, by filial piety

In widowhood detain'd. That selfish crime

Heavily, . . heavily, . . do I expiate! But I am old; and she was all to me. O King Yuhidthiton, I ask for death; In mercy, let me die! cruel it were 110 To bid me waste away alone in age, By the slow pain of grief. . . Give me the knife

Which pierced my daughter's bosom! The old man

Moved to the altar; none opposed his

With a firm hand he buried in his heart The reeking flint, and fell upon his child.

XXI. THE SPORTS

A TRANSITORY gloom that sight of death Impress'd upon the assembled multitude:

But soon the brute and unreflecting crew Turn'd to their sports. Some bare their olive limbs,

And in the race contend; with hopes and fears

Which rouse to rage, some urge the mimic war.

Here one upon his ample shoulders bears A comrade's weight, upon whose head a third

Stands poised, like Mercury in act to fly. Two others balance here on their shoulders

A bifork'd beam, while on its height a third

To nimble cadence shifts his glancing

And shakes a plume aloft, and wheels around

A wreath of bells with modulating sway. Here round a lofty mast the dancers

Quick, to quick music; from its top The multitude stood gazing, when a affix'd.

Each holds a coloured cord, and as they | Breathless, and with broad eyes, came weave

Vow'd to the temple had expired, my | The complex crossings of the mazy dance.

> The chequer'd network twists around the tree

> Its intertexture of harmonious hues. 20

But now a shout went forth, the Flyers mount,

And from all meaner sports the multitude

Flock to their favourite pastime. the ground.

Branchless and bark'd, the trunk of some tall pine

Is planted: near its summit a square frame;

Four cords pass through the perforated square,

And fifty times and twice around the

A mystic number, are entwined above. Four Aztecas, equipp'd with wings, ascend.

And round them bind the ropes; anon they wave

Their pinions, and upborn on spreading plumes

Launch on the air, and wheel in circling flight,

The lengthening cords untwisting as they fly.

A fifth above, upon the perilous point Dances, and shakes a flag; and on the

Others the while maintain their giddy

Till now, with many a round, the wheeling cords

Draw near their utmost length, and toward the ground

The aërial circles speed; then down the ropes

They spring, and on their way from line to line

while the shouting multitude Pass. endure

A shuddering admiration.

On such sports, Their feelings center'd in the joy of sight.

running on.

His pale lips trembling, and his bloodless cheek

Like one who meets a lion in his path.

The fire! the fire! the temple! he exclaim'd;

Mexitli!.. They, astonish'd at his words, Hasten toward the wonder, . . and behold!

The inner fane is sheeted white with fire.

Dumb with affright they stood; the enquiring King

Look'd to Tezozomoc; the Priest replied, I go! the Gods protect me; . . and therewith

He entered boldly in the house of flame. But instant bounding with inebriate joy He issues forth. . . The God! the God! he cries.

Joy!..joy!..the God!..the visible hand of Heaven!

Repressing then his transport, . . Ye all know

How that in Aztlan Madoc's impious hand 60

Destroyed Mexitli's image; . . it is here, Unbroken, and the same! . . Toward the gate

They press; they see the Giant Idol there,

The serpent girding him, his neck with hearts

Beaded, and in his hand the club, . . even such

As oft in Aztlan, on his azure throne, They had adored the God, they see him now.

Unbroken and the same! . . Again the Priest

Enter'd; again a second joy inspired
To frenzy all around; . . for forth he
came, 70

Shouting with new delight, . . for in his hand

The banner of the nation he upheld, That banner to their fathers sent from Heaven,

By them abandon'd to the conqueror.

He motion'd silence, and the crowd were still.

People of Aztlan! he began, when first Your fathers from their native land went forth. In search of better seats, this banner came

From Heaven. The Famine and the Pestilence

Had been among them; in their hearts the spring 80

Of courage was dried up: with midnight fires

Radiate, by midnight thunders heralded, This banner came from Heaven; and with it came

Health, valour, victory. Aztecas! again The God restores the blessing. To the God

Move now in solemn dance of grateful joy;

Exalt for him the song.

They form'd the dance, They rais'd the hymn, and sung Mexitli's praise.

Glory to thee, the Great, the Terrible, Mexitli, guardian God!.. From whence art thou,

O Son of Mystery? From whence art thou,

Whose sire thy Mother knew not? She at eve

Walk'd in the temple court, and saw from Heaven

A plume descend, as bright and beautiful,

As if some spirit had embodied there The rainbow hues, or dipt it in the light Of setting suns. To her it floated down; She placed it in her bosom, to bedeek The altar of the God; she sought it

there;
Amazed she found it not, amazed she

Another life infused. . . From whence art

O son of Mystery? From whence art

Whose sire thy Mother knew not?

Grief was hers, Wonder and grief, for life was in her womb,

And her stern children with revengeful eves

Beheld their Mother's shame. She sav their frowns,

She knew their plots of blood. Where shall she look

For succour, when her sons conspire her death?

Where hope for comfort, when her daughter whets

The impious knife of murder?.. From her womb

The voice of comfort came, the timely aid:

Already at her breast the blow was aim'd,

When forth Mexitli leapt, and in his hand The angry spear, to punish and to save. Glory to thee, the Great, the Terrible, Mexitli, guardian God!

Arise and save, Mexitli, save thy people! Dreadful one, Arise, redeem thy city, and revenge! An impious, an impenetrable foe, Hath blacken'd thine own altars, with

the blood

Of thine own priests; hath dash'd thine
Image down.

In vain did valour's naked breast op-

Their mighty arms; in vain the feeble

On their impenetrable mail was driven. Not against thee, Avenger, shall those arms

Avail, nor that impenetrable mail Resist the fiery arrows of thy wrath. Arise, go forth in anger, and destroy!

XXII. THE DEATH OF LINCOYA

Aztlan, meantime, presents a hideous scene

Of slaughter. The hot sunbeam, in her streets,

Parch'd the blood pools; the slain were heap'd in hills;

The victors, stretch'd in every little

With unhelm'd heads, reclining on their shields,

Slept the deep sleep of weariness. Ere long,

To needful labour rising, from the gates They drag the dead; and with united toil, They dig upon the plain the general grave.

The grave of thousands, deep and wide and long.

Ten such they delved, and o'er the multi-

Who levell'd with the plain the deep-dug pits.

Ten monumental hills they heap'd on high.

Next horror heightening joy, they overthrew

The skull-built towers, the files of human heads,

And earth to earth consign'd them. To the flames

They east the idols, and upon the wind Scatter'd their ashes; then the temples fell,

Whose black and putrid walls were scaled with blood.

And not one stone of those accursed piles 20

Was on another left.

Victorious thus In Aztlan, it behoved the Cymry now There to collect their strength, and there

await,
Or thence with centered numbers urge,
the war.

For this was Ririd missioned to the ships, For this Lincoya from the hills invites Erillyab and her tribe. There did not breathe.

On this wide world, a happier man that

Than young Lincoya, when from their retreat

He bade his countrymen come repossess The land of their forefathers; proud at heart 31

To think how great a part himself had borne

In their revenge, and that beloved one.
The gentle saviour of the Prince, whom
well

He knew his own dear love, and for the deed

Still dearer loved the dearest. Round the youth,

Women and children, the infirm and old, Gather to hear his tale; and as they stood With eyes of steady wonder, outstretch'd necks,

And open lips of listening eagerness, 40 Fast play'd the tide of triumph in his veins.

Flush'd his brown cheek, and kindled his dark eye.

And now, reposing from his toil awhile,

Lincoya, on a crag above the straits,

Sate underneath a tree, whose twinkling leaves

Sung to the gale at noon. Ayayaca
Sate by him in the shade: the old man
had loved

The youth beside him from his boyhood up,

And still would call him boy. They sate and watch'd

The laden bisons winding down the way, The multitude who now with joy forsook Their desolated dwellings; and their talk Was of the days of sorrow, when they groan'd

Beneath the intolerable yoke, till, sent By the Great Spirit o'er the pathless deep,

Prince Madoc the Deliverer came to save.

As thus they communed, came a woman up,

Seeking Lincoya; 'twas Aculhua's slave.

The nurse of Coatel. Her wretched eye, Her pale and livid countenance foretold Some tale of misery, and his life-blood ebb'd 61

In ominous fear. But when he heard her words

Of death, he seized the lance, and raised his arm

To strike the blow of comfort.

The old man Caught his uplifted hand. . . O'er-hasty boy,

Quoth he, regain her yet, if she was dear!

Seek thy beloved in the Land of Souls, And beg her from the Gods. The Gods will hear.

And in just recompense of love so true Restore their charge.

The miserable youth 70 Turn'd at his words a hesitating eye.

I knew a prisoner, . . so the old man pursued,

Or hoping to beguile the youth's despair With tales that suited the despair of youth,

Or credulous himself of what he told, . . I knew a prisoner once who welcomed death

With merriment and songs and joy of heart.

Because, he said, the friends whom he loved best

Were gone before him to the Land of Souls;

Nor would they to resume their mortal state,

Even when the Keeper of the Land allow'd,

Forsake its pleasures; therefore he rejoiced

To die and join them there. I question'd him.

How of these hidden things unknowable So certainly he spake. The man replied, One of our nation lost the maid he loved, Nor would he bear his sorrow, . . being one

And many dangers gallantly surpass'd, Till to the Country of the Dead he came. Gently the Guardian of the Land received

The living suppliant; listen'd to his prayer,

And gave him back the Spirit of the Maid.

But from that happy country, from the

Of joyance, from the splendour-sparkling dance,

Unwillingly compell'd, the Maiden's Soul Loathed to return; and he was warn'd to guard

The subtle captive well and warily, 100 Till in her mortal tenement relodged. Earthly delights might win her to re-

main A sojourner on earth. Such lessoning The Ruler of the Souls departed gave; And mindful of his charge the adventurer brought

His subtle captive home. There underneath

The shelter of a hut, his friends had watch'd

The Maiden's corpse, secured it from the sun,

And fann'd away the insect swarms of heaven.

A busy hand marr'd all the enterprize! Curious to see the Spirit, he unloosed
The knotted has which held her and

The knotted bag which held her, and she fled.

Lincoya, thou art brave; where man

has gone

Thou wouldst not fear to follow:

Silently

Lincoya listen'd, and with unmoved eves:

At length he answer'd, Is the journey long?

The old man replied, A way of many

I know a shorter path! exclaim'd the youth;

And up he sprung, and from the precipice

Darted: a moment, . . and Ayayaca heard 120

His body fall upon the rocks below.

XXIII. CARADOC AND SENENA

Maid of the golden locks, far other lot May gentle Heaven assign thy happier love.

Blue-eyed Senena! . . She, though not as yet

Had she put off her boy-habiliments, Had told Goervyl all the history

Of her sad flight, and easy pardon gain'd From that sweet heart, for guile which meant no ill.

And secrecy, in shame too long maintain'd.

With her dear Lady now, at this still hour

Of evening is the seeming page gone forth,

Beside Caermadoc mere. They loiter'd on,

Along the windings of its grassy shore, In such free interchange of inward thought

As the calm hour invited; or at times, Willingly silent, listening to the bird Whose one repeated melancholy note, By oft repeating melancholy made, Solicited the ear; or gladlier now

Hearkening that cheerful one, who knoweth all

The songs of all the winged choristers, 20 And in one sequence of melodious sounds

Pours all their music. But a wilder strain

At fits came o'er the water; rising now,

Now with a dying fall, in sink and

More exquisitely sweet than ever art Of man evoked from instrument of touch

Or beat, or breath. It was the evening gale.

Which passing o'er the harp of Caradoc. Swept all its chords at once, and blended

Their music into one continuous flow. 30 The solitary Bard beside his harp

Leant underneath a tree, whose spreading boughs,

With broken shade that shifted to the breeze,

Play'd on the waving waters. Over-

There was the leafy murmur, at his foot

The lake's perpetual ripple; and from far,

Borne on the modulating gale, was heard

The roaring of the mountain cataract... A blind man would have loved the lovely spot.

Here was Senena by her Lady led, 40 Trembling, but not reluctant. They drew nigh,

Their steps unheard upon the elastic moss,

10 Till playfully Goervyl, with quick touch,

Ran o'er the harp-strings. At the The song was framed; for in the face of sudden sound

He rose. . . Hath then thy hand, quoth she, O Bard.

Forgot its cunning, that the wind should

Thine harper?.. Come! one strain for Britain's sake :

And let the theme be Woman! . . He replied.

But if the strain offend, O Lady fair,

Blame thou the theme, not me!.. Then to the harp

He sung... Three things a wise man will not trust.

The Wind, the Sunshine of an April

And Woman's plighted faith. I have

The Weathercock upon the steeplenoint

Steady from morn till eve; and I have seen

The bees go forth upon an April morn, Secure the sunshine will not end in showers:

But when was Woman true?

False Bard! thereat, With smile of playful anger, she exclaim'd.

False Bard! and slanderous song! Were such thy thoughts

Of woman, when thy youthful lays were

In Heilyn's hall?.. But at that name his heart

Leapt, and his cheek with sudden flush was fired;

In Heilyn's hall, quoth he, I learn'd the song.

There was a Maid, who dwelt among the hills

Of Arvon, and to one of humbler birth Had pledged her troth; ... nor rashly, nor beguiled. . .

They had been playmates in their in-

And she in all his thoughts had borne a part,

And all his joys. The Moon and all the

Witness'd their mutual vows; and for The blue-eyed Maid, who fell upon his her sake

dav

She broke them. . . But her name? Goervyl ask'd:

Quoth he, The poet loved her still too well.

To couple it with shame.

O fate unjust Of womankind! she cried; our virtues bloom.

Like violets, in shade and solitude.

While evil eyes hunt all our failings out. For evil tongues to bruit abroad in iest.

And song of obloquy ! . . I knew a Maid. And she too dwelt in Arvon, and she too Loved one of lowly birth, who ill repaid Her spotless faith; for he to ill reports, And tales of falsehood cunningly devised.

Lent a light ear, and to his rival left

The loathing Maid. The wedding-day arrived,

The harpers and the gleemen, far and near,

Came to the wedding-feast; the wedding-guests

Were come, the altar drest, the bridemaids met;

The father, and the bridegroom, and the priest

Wait for the bride. But she the while did off

Her bridal robes, and clipt her golden locks. And put on boy's attire, through wood

and wild

To seek her own true love; and over

Forsaking all for him, she followed him, ...

Nor hoping nor deserving fate so fair; And at his side she stood, and heard him wrong

Her faith with slanderous tales; and his dull eve.

As it had learnt his heart's forgetfulness, Knows not the trembling one, who even

Yearns to forgive him all!

He turn'd, he knew breast.

XXIV. THE EMBASSY

HARK! from the towers of Aztlan how the shouts

Of clamorous joy re-ring! the rocks and hills

Take up the joyful sound, and o'er the lake

Roll their slow echoes. . . Thou art beautiful!

Queen of the Valley! thou art beautiful, Thy walls, like silver, sparkle to the sun;

Melodious wave thy groves, thy gardensweets

Enrich the pleasant air, upon the lake Lie the long shadows of thy towers, and high

In heaven thy temple-pyramids arise, to Upon whose summit now, far visible Against the clear blue sky, the Cross of

Christ
Proplains upto the notions round the

Proclaims unto the nations round the news

Of thy redemption. Thou art beautiful, Aztlan! O City of the Cymbric Prince! Long mayest thou flourish in thy beauty, long

Prosper beneath the righteous conqueror,

Who conquers to redeem! Long years of peace

And happiness await thy Lord and thee, Queen of the Valley!

Hither joyfully 20
The Hoamen came to repossess the land
Of their forefathers. Joyfully the youth
Came shouting, with acclaim of grateful
praise.

Their great Deliverer's name; the old,

Of other days, which mingled with their

Memory of many a hard calamity,

And thoughts of time and change, and human life

How changeful and how brief. Prince Madoc met

Erillyab at the gate... Sister and Queen, Said he, here let us hold united reign, 30 O'er our united people; by one faith. One interest bound, and closer to be link'd

By laws and language and domestic ties, Till both become one race, for ever more Indissolubly knit.

O friend, she cried, The last of all my family am I;

Yet sure, though last, the happiest, and by Heaven

Favour'd abundantly above them all. Dear Friend, and brother dear! enough

Beneath the shadow of thy shield to dwell,

And see my people, by thy fostering

And see my people, by thy fostering care,

Made worthy of their fortune. Graciously Hath the Beloved One appointed all, Educing good from ill, himself being good.

Then to the royal palace of the Kings Of Aztlan, Madoc led Erillyab,

There where her sires had held their ruder reign,

To pass the happy remnant of her years, Honour'd and loved by all.

Now had the Prince Provided for defence, disposing all 50 As though a ready enemy approach'd. But from Patamba yet no army moved; Four Heralds only, by the King dispatch'd,

Drew nigh the town. The Hoamen as they came,

Knew the green mantle of their privilege, The symbols which they bore, an arrowpoint

Depress'd, a shield, a net, which, from the arm

Suspended, held their food. They through the gate

Pass with permitted entrance, and demand

To see the Ocean Prince. The Conqueror 60

Received them, and the elder thus began:

Thus to the White King, King Yuhidthiton

His bidding sends; such greeting as from foe

Foe may receive, where individual hate Is none, but honour and assured esteem,

And what were friendship did the Gods permit.

The King of Aztlan sends. Oh dream not thou

That Aztlan is subdued; nor in the

Of conquest tempt thy fortune! Unprepared

For battle, at an hour of festival. Her children were surprised; and thou canst tell

How perilously they maintain'd the long And doubtful strife. From yonder temple-mount

Look round the plain, and count her towns, and mark

Her countless villages, whose habitants All are in arms against thee! Thinkest thou

To root them from the land? Or wouldst

thou live. Harass'd by night and day with endless

War at thy gates: and to thy children leave

That curse for their inheritance?.. The land

Is all before thee: Go in peace, and choose

Thy dwelling place, North, South, or East, or West;

Or mount again thy houses of the sea And search the waters. Whatsoe'er thy wants

Demand, will Aztlan willingly supply. Prepared with friendly succour, to assist soon departure. Thus Yuhidthiton.

Remembering his old friendship, counsels thee;

Thus, as the King of Aztlan, for himself And people, he commands. If obstinate, If blind to your own welfare, ye persist, Woe to ye, wretches! to the armed man.

Who in the fight must perish; to the

Who vainly on her husband's aid will call:

Woe to the babe that hangs upon the breast.

For Aztlan comes in anger, and her Gods I will not seek him there, against his Spare none.

The Conqueror calmly answer'd him. . .

By force we won your city, Azteca;

By force we will maintain it: . . to the King

Repeat my saving. . . To this goodly

Your fathers came for an abiding place, Strangers like us, but not like us, in peace.

They conquer'd and destroyed. tyrant race.

Bloody and faithless, to the hills they drove

The unoffending children of the vale. And, day by day, in cruel sacrifice Consumed them. God hath sent the

Avengers here! Powerful to save we come, and to

destroy, When Mercy on Destruction calls for aid.

Go tell your nation that we know their force.

That they know ours! that their Patamba soon

Shall fall like Aztlan: and what other towns

They seek in flight, shall like Patamba fall:

Till broken in their strength and spiritcrush'd

They bow the knee, or leave the land to us.

Its worthier Lords.

If this be thy reply. Son of the Ocean! said the messenger. I bid thee, in the King of Aztlan's name

In the field of blood, Mortal defiance. Before our multitudes shall trample down

Thy mad and miserable countrymen, Yuhidthiton invites thee to the strife Of equal danger. So may he avenge Coanocotzin, or like him in death

Discharge his duty. Tell Yuhidthiton. Madoc replied, that in the field of

blood I never shunn'd a foe. But say thou to him.

life

To raise the hand which hath been joined with his

In peace... With that the Heralds went their way;

Nor to the right nor to the left they turn, But to Patamba straight they journey back.

XXV. THE LAKE FIGHT

THE mariners, meantime, at Ririd's will, Unreeve the rigging, and the masts they strike:

And now ashore they haul the lighten'd hulks.

Tear up the deck, the severed planks bear off,

Disjoin the well-scarfed timbers and the keel

Loosen asunder: then to the lake-side Bear the materials, where the Ocean Lord

Himself directs their work. Twelve vessels there,

Fitted alike to catch the wind, or sweep With oars the moveless surface, they prepare;

Lay down the keel, the stern-post rear, and fix

The strong-curved timbers. Others from the wood

Bring the tall pines, and from their hissing trunks

Force, by the aid of fire, the needful gum;

Beneath the close-caulk'd planks its odorous stream

They pour; then, last, the round-projecting prows

With iron arm, and launch, in uproar loud

Of joy, anticipating victory,

The galleys long and sharp. The masts are rear'd,

The sails are bent, and lo! the ready barks

Lie on the lake.

It chanced, the Hoamen found A spy of Aztlan, and before the Prince They led him. But when Madoc bade him tell. As his life-ransom, what his nation's force.

And what their plans; the savage answer'd him,

With dark and sullen eye and smile of wrath.

If aught the knowledge of my country's force

Could profit thee, be sure, ere I would let
My tongue play traitor, thou shouldst
limb from limb

Hew me, and make each separate member feel 30

A separate agony of death. O Prince! But I will tell ye of my nation's force,

That ye may know and tremble at your doom;

That fear may half subdue ye to the sword

Of vengeance. . . Can ye count the stars of Heaven?

The waves which ruffle o'er the lake? the leaves

Swept from the autumnal forest? Can ye look

Upon the eternal snows of yonder height And number each particular flake that form'd

The mountain-mass?..so numberless they come,

Whoe'er can wield the sword, or hurl the lance.

Or aim the arrow; from the growing boy, Ambitious of the battle, to the old man, Who to revenge his country and his Gods

Hastens, and then to die. By land they come;

And years must pass away ere on their path

The grass again will grow: they come by lake:

And ye shall see the shoals of their cances Darken the waters. Strangers! when our Gods

Have conquer'd, when ye lie upon the Stone 50

Of Sacrifice extended one by one,
Half of our armies cannot taste your

Though given in equal shares, and every share

Minced like a nestling's food!

Madoc replied,

Azteca, we are few; but through the

The Lion walks alone. The lesser fowls Flock multitudinous in heaven, and fly Before the eagle's coming. We are few; And yet thy nation hath experienced us Enough for conquest. Tell thy countrymen.

We can maintain the city which we won.

So saying he turn'd away, rejoiced at heart

To know himself alike by lake or land Prepared to meet their power.

The fateful day Draws on; by night the Aztecas embark.

At day-break from Patamba they set forth,

From every creek and inlet of the lake. All moving towards Aztlan; safely thus Weening to reach the plain before her walls.

And fresh for battle. Shine thou forth,
O Sun!
70
Shine fairly forth upon a scene so fair!

Shine fairly forth upon a scene so fair!
Their thousand boats, and the ten
thousand oars

From whose broad bowls the waters fall and flash.

And twice ten thousand feather'd helms, and shields.

Glittering with gold and searlet plumery. Onward they come with song and swelling horn;

While, louder than all voice and instrument.

The dash of their ten thousand oars, from shore

To shore and hill to hill, re-echoing rolls, In undistinguishable peals of sound so And endless echo. On the other side Advance the British barks; the freshening breeze

Fills the broad sail, around the rushing

The waters sing, while proudly they sail

Lords of the water. Shine thou forth.

Shine forth upon their hour of victory!

Onward the Cymry speed. The Aztecas.

Though wondering at that unexpected sight,

Bravely made on to meet them, seized their bows.

And shower'd, like rain, upon the pavaised barks,

The rattling shafts. Strong blows the auspicious gale;
Madoc, the Lord of Ocean, leads the

way;
He holds the helm; the galley where

he guides

Flies on, and full upon the first canoe Drives shattering; midway its long length it struck.

And o'er the wreck with unimpeded force

Dashes among the fleet. The astonish'd

Gaze in inactive terror. They behold Their splinter'd vessels floating all around,

Their warriors struggling in the lake, with arms

Experienced in the battle vainly now.

Dismay'd they drop their bows, and
cast away

Their unavailing spears, and take to

Before the Masters of the Elements,

Who rode the waters, and who made the winds

Wing them to vengeance! Forward now they bend,

And backward then, with strenuous strain of arm,

Press the broad paddle. . . Hope of victory

Was none, nor of defence, nor of revenge,
To sweeten death. Toward the shore
they speed, 110

Toward the shore they lift their longing eyes:..

O fools, to meet on their own element. The Sons of Ocean!.. Could they but

Set foot, the strife were equal, or to die Less dreadful. But, as if with wings of wind.

On fly the British barks! . . the favouring breeze Blows strong; . . far, far behind their roaring keels

Lies the long line of foam; the helm directs

Their force; they move as with the limbs of life,

Obedient to the will that governs them. Where'er they pass, the crashing shock is heard,

The dash of broken waters, and the cry Of sinking multitudes. Here one plies

The practised limbs of youth, but o'er his head

The galley drives; one follows a canoe With skill availing only to prolong

Suffering; another, as with wiser aim
He swims across, to meet his coming

He swims across, to meet his coming friends,

Stunn'd by the hasty and unheeding oar, Sinks senseless to the depths. Lo! yonder boat

Graspt by the thronging strugglers; its light length

Yields to the overbearing weight, and all Share the same ruin. Here another shows

Crueller contest, where the crew hack off The hands that hang for life upon its side.

Lest all together perish; then in vain The voice of friend or kinsman prays for mercy,

Imperious self controuls all other thoughts:

And still they deal around unnatural wounds.

When the strong bark of Britain over all Sails in the path of death. . . God of the Lake.

Tlaloc! and thou, O Aiauh, green-robed Queen!

How many a wretch, in dying agonies. Invoked ye in the misery of that day! Long after, on the tainted lake, the dead Welter'd; there, perch'd upon his floating prey,

The vulture fed in daylight; and the wolves.

Assembled at their banquet round its banks,

Disturb'd the midnight with their howl of joy.

XXVI. THE CLOSE OF THE CENTURY

THERE was mourning in Patamba; the north wind

Blew o'er the lake, and drifted to the shore

The floating wreck and bodies of the dead.

Then on the shore the mother might be seen,

Seeking her child; the father to the tomb,

With limbs too weak for that unhappy weight,

Bearing the bloated body of his son; The wife, who, in expectant agony,

Watch'd the black carcass on the coming wave.

On every brow terror was legible, 10 Anguish in every eye. There was not one

Who in the general ruin did not share Peculiar grief, and in his country's loss Lament some dear one dead. Along the lake

The frequent funeral-piles, for many a

With the noon-light their melancholy flames

Dimly commingled; while the mourners stood,

Watching the pile, to feed the lingering

As slowly it consumed the watery corpse.

Thou didst not fear, young Tlalala! thy soul, 20

Unconquer'd and unconquerable, rose Superior to its fortune. When the Chiefs

Hung their dejected heads, as men subdued

In spirit, then didst thou, Yuhidthiton, Calm in the hour of evil, still maintain Thy even courage. They from man to man

Go, with the mourners mourning, and by grief

Exciting rage, till, at the promised fight,

The hope of vengeance, a ferocious joy Flash'd in the eyes which glisten'd still with tears

Of tender memory. To the brave they spake

Of Aztlan's strength, . . for Aztlan still was strong: . .

The late defeat, . . not there by manly

By honourable valour, by the force

Of arms subdued, shame aggravated loss:

The White Men from the waters came, perchance

Sons of the Ocean, by their parent Gods Aided, and conquerors not by human

When man met man, when in the field of fight

The soldier on firm earth should plant his foot.

Then would the trial be, the struggle then,

The glory, the revenge.

Tezozomoc, Alike unbroken by defeat, endured The evil day; but in his sullen mind

Work'd thoughts of other vengeance.

He the King

Summon'd apart from all, with Tlalala, And thus advised them: We have vainly tried

The war; these mighty Strangers will not yield

To mortal strength; yet shall they be

So ye will heed my counsel, and to force Add wisdom's aid. Put on a friendly

Send to their Prince the messenger of peace;

He will believe our words: he will for-

The past; ... the offender may. So days and months,

Yea, years, if needful, will we wear a face Of friendliness, till some fit hour arrive, When we may fire their dwellings in the night,

Or mingle poison in their cups of mirth. The warrior, from whose force the Lion flies,

Falls by the Serpent's tooth.

Thou speakest well, 60 Tlalala answer'd; but my spirit ill Can brook revenge delay'd.

The Priest then turn'd His small and glittering eye toward the

King;
But on the Monarch's mild and manly

A meaning sate, which made that

erafty eye Bend, quickly abash'd. While yet I was a child.

Replied the King of Aztlan, on my heart My father laid two precepts. Boy, be brave!

So, in the midnight battle, shalt thou meet.

Fearless, the sudden foe. Boy, let thy lips 70

Be clean from falsehood! in the midday sun,

So never shalt thou need from mortal man

To turn thy guilty face. Tezozomoc, Holy I keep the lessons of my sire.

But if the enemy, with their dreadful arms,

Again, said Tlalala, . . If again the Gods Will our defeat, Yuhidthiton replied,

Vain is it for the feeble power of man To strive against their will. I augur not

Of ill, young Tiger! but if ill betide, 80 The land is all before us. Let me hear Of perfidy and scrpent-wiles no more! In the noon-day war, and in the face of

Heaven,
I meet my foes. Let Aztlan follow me;
And if one man of all her multitudes
Shall better play the warrior in that

hour,
Be his the sceptre! But if the people

The perilous strife, and own themselves subdued,

Let us depart! The universal Sun

Confines not to one land his partial beams;

Nor is man rooted, like a tree, whose seed The winds on some ungenial soil have cast,

There where he cannot prosper.

The dark Priest Conceal'd revengeful anger, and replied, Let the King's will be done! An aweful dav

Draws on; the Circle of the Years is full:

We tremble for the event. The times are strange:

There are portentous changes in the world:

Perchance its end is come.

Be it thy care, Priest of the Gods, to see the needful

Duly perform'd, Yuhidthiton replied. On the third day, if yonder Lord of Light Begin the Circle of the Years anew, Again we march to war.

One day is past; Another day comes on. At earliest dawn Then was there heard through all Patamba's streets

The warning voice . . Woe! woe! the Sun hath reach'd

The limits of his course; he hath fulfill'd

The appointed cycle!.. Fast, and weep. and pray, . .

Four Suns have perish'd, . . fast, and weep, and pray,

Lest the fifth perish also. On the first The floods arose; the waters of the heavens,

Bursting their everlasting boundaries, Whelm'd in one deluge earth and sea and sky,

And quench'd its orb of fire. second Sun

Then had its birth, and ran its round of

Till having reach'd its date, it fell from heaven.

And crush'd the race of men. Another

The Gods assign'd to Nature; the third

Form'd the celestial circle; then its

Burst forth, and overspread earth, sea, and sky,

Deluging the wide universe with fire, Till all things were consumed, and its The children of the temple, in long own flames

Fed on itself, and spent themselves, and

Was vacancy and darkness. Yet again The World had being, and another Sun Roll'd round the path of Heaven. That perish'd too:

The mighty Whirlwinds rose, and far away

Scatter'd its dying flames. The fifth was born;

The fifth to-day completes its destined course, Perchance to rise no more. O Aztlan.

And pray! the Cycle of the Years is full!

Thus through Patamba did ominous voice

Exhort the people. Fervent vows all dav

Were made, with loud lament; in every fane.

In every dwelling-place of man, were prayers,

The supplications of the affrighted heart. Earnestly offered up with tears and groans.

So pass'd the forenoon; and when now the Sun

Sloped from his southern height the downward wav Of Heaven, again the ominous warner

cried. Woe! woe! the Cycle of the Years is

Quench every fire! Extinguish every

light! And every fire was quench'd, and every light

Extinguish'd at the voice.

Meantime the Priests Began the rites. They gash'd themselves, and plunged

Into the sacred pond of Ezapan,

Till the clear water, on whose bed of sand

The sunbeams sparkled late, opaque with blood.

On its black surface mirror'd all things round.

search,

Had gather'd for the service of this

All venomous things that fly, or wind their path

With sinuous trail, or crawl on reptile

These in one cauldron, o'er the sacred

They scorch, till of the loathsome living tribes.

Who, writhing in their burning agonies. Fix on each other ill-directed wounds, Ashes alone are left. In infants' blood They mix the infernal unction, and the Priests

Anoint themselves therewith.

Holds on.

Lo! from the South The Orb of Glory his regardless way Again Patamba's streets

receive The ominous voice, . . Woe! woe! the

Sun pursues His journey to the limits of his course! Let every man in darkness veil his wife;

Veil every maiden's face; let every Gaze on the sacred summit, hoping

Be hid in darkness, there to weep and Soon to behold the fire of sacrifice

That they may see again the birth of The Pabas to the sacred peak begin light!

They heard, and every husband veil'd his wife

In darkness; every maiden's face was veil'd:

pray,

That they might see the birth of light once more.

Westward the Sun proceeds; the tall tree casts

A longer shade; the night-eyed insect

Wake to their portion of the circling hours;

The water-fowl, retiring to the shore, Sweep in long files the surface of the

lake. Then from Patamba to the sacred

mount The Priests go forth; but not with And shedding on the bones of the songs of joy, 180

Nor cheerful instruments they go, nor

Of festive followers: silent and alone. Leading one victim to his dreadful death.

They to the mountain-summit wend their wav.

On the south shore, and level with the

Patamba stood; westward were seen the walls

Of Aztlan rising on a gentle slope; Southward the plain extended far and

To the east the mountain-boundary began.

And there the sacred mountain rear'd its head:

Above the neighbouring heights, its lofty peak

Was visible far off. In the vale below, Along the level borders of the lake, The assembled Aztecas, with wistful

there

Arise, sure omen of continued light. Their way, and as they go, with ancient songs

Hymn the departed Sun.

O Light of Life 200 Yet once again arise! yet once again The children were in darkness led to Commence thy course of glory! Time hath seen

> Four generations of mankind destroy'd, When the four Suns expired; oh, let not thou.

Human thyself of yore, the human race Languish and die in darkness!

The fourth Sun Had perish'd; for the mighty Whirlwinds rose,

And swept it, with the dust of the shatter'd world.

Into the great abyss. The eternal Gods Built a new World, and to a Hero race Assign'd it for their goodly dwellingplace;

destroy'd

A quickening dew, from them, as from a seed,

Made a new race of human-kind spring up,

The menials of the Heroes born of Heaven.

But in the firmament no orb of day Perform'd its course; Nature was blind; the fount

Of light had ceased to flow; the eye of Heaven

Was quench'd in darkness. In the sad obscure,

The earth-possessors to their parent Gods 220

Pray'd for another Sun, their bidding heard.

And in obedience raised a flaming pile. Hopeful they circled it, when from above The voice of the Invisible proclaim'd.

That he who bravely plunged amid the fire

Should live again in heaven, and there shine forth

The Sun of the young World. The Hero race

Grew pale, and from the fiery trial shrunk.

Thou, Nahuaztin, thou, O mortal born, Heardest! thy heart was strong, the flames received 230

Their victim, and the humbled Heroes

The orient sky, with smiles of rosy joy, Welcome the coming of the new-born

O human once, now let not human-kind Languish, and die in darkness!

In the East Then didst thou pause to see the Hero

race
Perish. In vain, with impious arms,

they strove Against thy will; in vain against thine

orb

They shot their shafts; the arrows of their pride

Fell on themselves; they perish'd, to thy praise. 240 So perish still thine impious enemies,

O Lord of Day! But to the race devout,

Who offer up their morning sacritice,

Honouring thy godhead, and with morning hymns,

And with the joy of music and of dance, Welcome thy glad uprise, . . to them, O Sun.

Still let the fountain-streams of splendour flow.

Still smile on them propitious, thou whose smile

Is light and life and joyance! Once again, 249
Parent of Being, Prince of Glory, rise,

Begin thy course of beauty once again!

Such was their ancient song, as up the height

Slowly they wound their way. The multitude

Beneath repeat the strain; with fearful eyes

They watch the spreading glories of the west!

And when at length the hastening orb hath sunk

Below the plain, such sinking at the heart

They feel, as he who hopeless of return From his dear home departs. Still on the light,

The last green light that lingers in the west, 260

Their looks are fasten'd, till the clouds of night

Roll on, and close in darkness the whole heaven.

Then ceased their songs; then o'er the crowded vale

No voice of man was heard. Silent and still

They stood, all turn'd toward the east, in hope

There on the holy mountain to behold The sacred fire, and know that once again

The Sun begins his stated round of years.

The Moon arose; she shone upon the lake,

Which lay one smooth expanse of silver light! 270

She shone upon the hills and rocks, and cast

Upon their hollows and their hidden

A blacker depth of shade. Who then look'd round,

Beholding all that mighty multitude, Felt yet severer awe, . . so solemnly still The thronging thousands stood. The breeze was heard

That rustled in the reeds; the little

That rippled to the shore and left no foam,

Sent its low murmurs far.

Meantime the Priests
Have stretch'd their victim on the
mountain-top; 280

A miserable man, his breast is bare, Bare for the death that waits him; bu

Bare for the death that waits him; but no hand

May there inflict the blow of mercy.
Piled

On his bare breast, the cedar boughs are laid;

On his bare breast, dry sedge and odorous gums

Laid ready to receive the sacred spark, And blaze, to herald the ascending Sun,

Upon his living altar. Round the wretch

The inhuman ministers of rites accurst

Stand, and expect the signal when to strike 290

The seed of fire. Their Chief, Tezozomoc,

Apart from all, upon the pinnacle

Of that high mountain, eastward turns his eyes;

For now the hour draws nigh, and speedily

He looks to see the first faint dawn of day

Break through the orient sky.

Impatiently

The multitude await the happy sign.

Long hath the midnight pase'd, and
every hour,

Yea, every moment, to their torturing fears

Seem'd lengthen'd out, insufferably long 300

Silent they stood, and breathless in suspense.

The breeze had fallen: no stirring breath of wind

Rustled the reeds. Oppressive, motionless,

It was a labour and a pain to breathe
The close, hot, heavy air. . . Hark! from
the woods

The howl of their wild tenants! and the birds, ...

The day-birds, in blind darkness fluttering,

Fearful to rest, uttering portentous cries!

Anon, the sound of distant thunders came:

They peal beneath their feet. Earth shakes and yawns, . . 310
And lo! upon the sacred mountain's

top,
The light . . the mighty flame! A

cataract Of fire bursts upward from the moun-

tain head, ...
High, .. high, .. it shoots! the liquid
fire boils out:

It streams in torrents down! Tezozo-

Beholds the judgement: wretched, . . wretched man.

On the upmost pinnacle he stands, and

The lava floods beneath him: and his hour

Is come. The fiery shower, descending, heaps

Red ashes round; they fall like drifted snows, 320

And bury and consume the accursed Priest.

The Tempest is abroad. Fierce from the North

A wind uptears the lake, whose lowest depths

Rock, while convulsions shake the solid earth.

Where is Patamba? where the multitudes

Who throng'd her level shores? The mighty Lake

Hath burst its bounds, and you wide valley roars,

A troubled sea, before the rolling storm.

XXVII. THE MIGRATION OF THE AZTECAS

THE storm hath ceased; but still the lava-tides

Roll down the mountain-side in streams of fire:

Down to the lake they roll, and yet roll on,

All burning, through the waters. Heaven above

Glows round the burning mount, and fiery clouds

Scour through the black and starless firmament.

Far off, the Eagle, in her mountain-nest, Lies watching in alarm, with steady eye, The midnight radiance.

But the storm hath ceased; The earth is still;..and lo! while yet the dawn

Is struggling through the eastern cloud, the barks

Of Madoc on the lake!

What man is he
On yonder crag, all dripping from the
flood

Who hath escaped its force? He lies along,

Now near exhaust with self-preserving toil,

And still his eye dwells on the spreading waves,

Where late the multitudes of Aztlan stood,

Collected in their strength. It is the King

Of Aztlan, who, extended on the rock, Looks vainly for his people. He beholds

The barks of Madoc plying to preserve The strugglers;.. but how few! upon the crags

Which verge the northern shore, upon the heights

Eastward, how few have refuged! Then the King

Almost repented him of life preserved, And wished the waves had whelmed him, or the sword

Fallen on him, ere this ill, this wretchedness,

This desolation. Spirit-troubled thus, He call'd to mind how, from the first, his heart 29

Inclined to peace, and how reluctantly, Obedient to the Pabas and their Gods,

Had he to this unhappy war been driven.

All now was ended: it remain'd to yield, To obey the inevitable will of Heaven, From Aztlan to depart. As thus he mused.

A Bird, upon a bough which overhung The rock, as though in echo to his thought,

Cried out, . . Depart! depart! for so the note,

Articulately in his native tongue.

Spake to the Azteca. The King look'd up;

The hour, the horrors round him, had impress'd

Feelings and fears well fitted to receive All superstition; and the voice which cried,

Depart! depart! seem'd like the voice of fate,

He thought, perhaps Coanocotzin's soul, Descending from his blissful halls in the hour

Of evil thus to comfort and advise,

Hover'd above him.

Lo! toward the rock, Ouring with feeble arms his difficult way. A warrior struggles; he hath reachly the rock,

Hath graspt it, but his strength, exhausted, fails

To lift him from the depth. The King descends

Timely in aid; he holds the feeble one By his long locks, and on the safety-place Lands him. He, panting, from his clotted hair

Shook the thick waters, from his forehead wiped

The blinding drops; on his preserver's

Then look'd, and knew the King. Then Tlalala

Fell on his neck, and groan'd. They laid them down

In silence, for their hearts were full of woe.

The sun came forth, it shone upon the

They felt the kindly beams; their strengthen'd blood

Flow'd with a freer action. They arose, And look'd around, if aught of hope might meet

Their prospect. On the lake the galleys plied

Their toil successfully, ever to the shore Bearing their rescued charge: eastern heights,

Rightward and leftward of the fiery mount.

Were throng'd with fugitives, whose growing crowds

Speckled the ascent. Then Tialala took hope,

And his young heart, reviving, re-assumed

Its wonted vigour. Let us to the heights.

He cried; .. all is not lost, Yuhidthiton! When they behold thy countenance, the

Will cheer them in their woe, and they will bless

The Gods of Aztlan.

To the heights they went; And when the remnant of the people saw Yuhidthiton preserved, such comfort then

They felt, as utter wretchedness can

That only gives grief utterance, only speaks

In groans and recollections of the past. He look'd around: a multitude was there, . .

But where the strength of Aztlan? where her hosts?

Her marshall'd myriads where, whom yester Sun

Had seen in arms array'd, in spirit

Mighty in youth and courage?.. What were these.

Who from Patamba when the shock

yet each

Among the few who from the lake escaped.

Wandering with eager eves and wretched

The King beheld and groan'd; against

He leant, and bow'd his head, subdued of soul.

Meantime, amid the crowd, doth Tlalala

Seek for his wife and boy. In vain he seeks

Ilanquel there; in vain for her he asks;

A troubled look, a melancholy eye,

A silent motion of the hopeless head, These answer him. But Tlalala represt His anguish, and he call'd upon the King;...

Yuhidthiton! thou seest thy people left:

Their fate must be determined; they arc here

Houseless and wanting food.

against their wrath?

The King look'd up, . . It is determined, Tlalala! the Gods Have crush'd us. Who can stand

Have we not life and strength? the Tiger cried.

Disperse these women to the towns which stand

Beyond the ruinous waters; against

The White Men will not war. Ourselves are few.

Too few to root the invaders from our land.

Or meet them with the hope of equal tight:

Yet may we shelter in the woods, and

The Lion's liberty; and man by man

Destroy them, till they shall not dare to

This remnant of the people? Women Beyond their city walls, to sow their fields,

> Or bring the harvest in. We may steal forth

Ran with their infants; widow'd now, In the dark midnight, go and burn and

Till all their dreams shall be of fire and death.

Their sleep be fear and misery.

Then the King Stretch'd forth his hand, and pointed to the lake

Where Madoc's galleys still to those who clung

To the tree-tops for life, or faintly still Were floating on the waters, gave their aid. . .

O think not, Tlalala, that ever more Will I against those noble enemies

Raise my right hand in war, lest righteous Heaven

Should blast the impious hand and thankless heart!

The Gods are leagued with them; the Elements

Banded against us! For our overthrow

Were yonder mountain-springs of fire ordain'd;

For our destruction the earth-thunders loosed.

And the everlasting boundaries of the

Gave way, that these destroying floods might roll

Over the brave of Aztlan! . . We must

The country which our fathers won in arms:

We must depart.

The word yet vibrated Fresh on their hearing, when the Bird above,

Flapping his heavy wings, repeats the sound.

Depart! depart!.. Ye hear! the King exclaim'd:

It is an omen sent to me from Heaven; I heard it late in solitude, the voice 141 Of fate. . . It is Coanocotzin's soul,

Who counsels our departure. . . And the Bird

Still flew around, and in his wheeling

Pronounced the articulate note. Tho people heard

In faith, and Tialala made no reply: But dark his brow, and gloomy was his We bow before their will! To them we frown.

Then spake the King, and called a messenger.

And bade him speed to Aztlan. . . Seek the Lord

Of Ocean; tell him that Yuhidthiton Yields to the will of Heaven, and leaves the land

His fathers won in war. Only one boon. In memory of our former friendship, ask.

The Ashes of my Fathers, . . if indeed The conqueror have not cast them to the winds.

The herald went his way circuitous, Along the mountains, . . for the flooded vale

Barr'd the near passage: but before his

Could traverse half their track, the fugitives

Beheld canoes from Aztlan, to the foot Of that protecting eminence, whereon They had their stand, draw nigh. The

doubtful sight Disturb'd them, lest perchance with

hostile strength They came upon their weakness. Wrong-

ful fear. . . For now Cadwallon, from his bark un-

arm'd. Set foot ashore, and for Yuhidthiton Enquired, if yet he lived? The King receives

His former friend. . . From Madoc come I here.

The Briton said: Raiment and food he sends.

And peace; so shall this visitation prove

A blessing, if it knit the bonds of peace, And make us as one people.

Hearest thou him? Yuhidthiton exclaim'd.

Do thou thy pleasure, King! the Tiger cried:

My path is plain... Thereat Yuhidthiton. Answering, replied, Thus humbled as thou seest.

Beneath the visitation of the Gods,

yield;

To you, their favourites, we resign the land

()ur fathers conquer'd. Never more may Fate 180

In your days or your children's to the

Of time afflict it thus!

He said, and call'd The Heralds of his pleasure. . . Go ye forth

Throughout the land: North, South, and East, and West,

Proclaim the ruin. Say to all who bear The name of Azteca, Heaven hath destroy'd

Our nation: Say, the voice of Heaven was heard, . .

Heard ye it not?.. bidding us leave the land,

Who shakes us from her bosom. Ye will find.

Women, old men, and babes; the many, weak 190

Of body and of spirit ill prepared, With painful toil, through long and

dangerous ways
To seek another country. Say to them,

The White Men will not lift the arm of power

Against the feeble; here they may remain

In peace, and to the grave in peace go down.

But they who would not have their children lose

The name their fathers bore, will join our march.

Ere ye set forth, behold the destined way.

He bade a pile be raised upon the top Of that high eminence, to all the winds Exposed. They raised the pile, and left it free

To all the winds of Heaven; Yuhidthiton Alone approach'd it, and applied the torch.

The day was calm, and o'er the flaming pile

The wavy smoke hung lingering, like a mist

That in the morning tracks the valleystream.

Swell over swell it rose, erect above, On all sides spreading like a stately

palm.

So moveless were the winds. Upward it roll'd, 210

Still upward, when a stream of upper air Cross'd it, and bent its top, and drove it on,

Straight over Aztlan. An acclaiming shout

Welcomed the will of Heaven; for lo, the smoke

Fast travelling on, while not a breath of air

Is felt below. Ye see the appointed course:

Exclaim'd the King. Proclaim it where ye go!

On the third morning we begin our march.

Soon o'er the lake a winged galley sped,

Wafting the Ocean Prince. He bore, preserved 220

When Aztlan's bloody temples were cast down.

The Ashes of the Dead. The King received

The relics, and his heart was full; his eye

Dwelt on his father's urn. At length he said,

One more request, O Madoc! . . If the lake

Should ever to its ancient bounds return, Shrined in the highest of Patamba's towers

Coanocotzin rests... But wherefore this?

Thou wilt respect the Ashes of the King.

Then Madoc said, Abide not here, O King, 230 Thus open to the changeful elements; But till the day of your departure come,

But till the day of your departure come, Sojourn with me. . . Madoc, that must not be!

Yuhidthiton replied. Shall I behold A stranger dwelling in my father's house?

Shall I become a guest, where I was wont

To give the guest his welcome? . . He

After short pause of speech, . . For our old men.

And helpless babes and women; for all those

Whom wisely fear and feebleness deter tempt strange paths, through swamp and wilderness

And hostile tribes, for these Yuhidthiton Intreats thy favour. Underneath thy

They may remember me without regret, Yet not without affection. . . They shall

My people, Madoc answer'd. . . And the

holiness transmitted from their sires, . .

Pursued the King, . . will these be suffer'd them?.

Blood must not flow, the Christian Prince replied;

No Priest must dwell among us; that hath been

The cause of all this misery ! . . Enough, Yuhidthiton replied; I ask no more. It is not for the conquer'd to impose Their law upon the conqueror.

Then he turn'd, And lifted up his voice, and call'd upon The people:.. All whom fear or feeble-

ness Withhold from following my adven-

turous path, Prince Madoc will receive. No blood must flow,

No Paba dwell among them. upon ye,

Ye who are weak of body or of heart, The Strangers' easy yoke: beneath their

Ye may remember me without regret. Soon take your choice, and speedily depart,

Lest ye impede the adventurers. . . As he spake,

Tears flow'd, and groans were heard. The line was drawn,

Which whoso would accept the Strangers' yoke

Should pass. A multitude o'erpast the | Should I have borne away with me the line:

But all the youth of Aztlan crowded round

Yuhidthiton, their own beloved King.

So two days long, with unremitting toil.

The barks of Britain to the adventurers Bore due supply; and to new habitants The city of the Cymry spread her gates:

And in the vale around, and on the heights.

Their numerous tents were pitch'd. Meantime the tale

Of ruin went abroad, and how the Gods Had driven her sons from Aztlan. the King,

Companions of his venturous enterprize, The bold repair'd; the timid and the weak.

All whom, averse from perilous wanderings, A gentler nature had disposed to peace, Beneath the Strangers' easy rule remain'd.

Now the third morning came. break of day

The mountain echoes to the busy sound multitudes. Before the moving tribe

The Pabas bear, enclosed from public

Mexitli; and the Ashes of the Kings Follow the Chair of God. Yuhidthiton Then leads the marshall'd ranks, and by his side.

Silent and thoughtfully, went Tlalala.

At the north gate of Aztlan, Malinal, Borne in a litter, waited their approach; And now alighting, as the train drew nigh.

Propt by a friendly arm, with feeble step Advanced to meet the King. Yuhidthiton.

With eye severe and darkening countenance,

Met his advance. I did not think, quoth

Thou wouldst have ventured this! and liefer far

thought

That Malinal had shunn'd his brother's sight, 300

Because their common blood yet raised in him

A sense of his own shame!.. Comest thou to show

Those wounds, the marks of thine unnatural war

Against thy country? Or to boast the meed

Of thy dishonour, that thou tarriest here.

Sharing the bounty of the Conqueror, While, with the remnant of his country-

Saving the Gods of Aztlan and the name.

Thy brother and thy King goes forth to

His fortune!

Calm and low the youth replied, Ill dost thou judge of me, Yuhidthiton! And rashly doth my brother wrong the heart

He better should have known! Howbeit,
I come

Prepared for grief. These honourable wounds

Were gain'd when, singly, at Caermadoc, I

Opposed the ruffian Hoamen: and even now,

Thus feeble as thou seest me, come I thence,

For this farewell. Brother, . . Yuhid-thiton, . .

By the true love which thou didst bear my youth,

Which ever, with a love as true, my heart 320

Hath answer'd, . . by the memory of that hour

When at our mother's funeral pile we stood,

Go not away in wrath, but call to mind

What thou hast ever known me! Side by side

We fought against the Strangers, side by side

We fell; together in the council-hall

We counsell'd peace, together in the field

Of the assembly pledged the word of peace.

When plots of secret slaughter were devised, 329

I raised my voice alone, alone I kept My plighted faith, alone I prophesied

The judgement of just Heaven; for this I bore

Reproach and shame and wrongful banishment,

In the action self-approved, and justified

By this unhappy issue.

As he spake,
Did natural feeling strive within the
King,

And thoughts of other days, and brotherly love,

And inward consciousness that had he

Stood forth, obedient to his better mind,

Nor weakly yielded to the wily priests, Wilfully blind, perchance even now in peace 34[‡]

The kingdom of his fathers had preserved

Her name and empire. . . Malinal, he oried,

Thy brother's heart is sore: in better times

I may with kindlier thoughts remember thee

And honour thy true virtue. Now,

So saying, to his heart he held the youth,

Then turn'd away. But then cried Tlalala,

Farewell, Yuhidthiton! the Tiger cried; For I too will not leave my native

land, . . 350
Thou who wert King of Aztlan! Go thy
way;

And be it prosperous. Through the gate thou seest

Yon tree that overhangs my father's house;

My father lies beneath it. Call to mind

Sometimes that tree; for at its foot in peace

Shall Tlalala be laid, who will not live Survivor of his country.

Thus he said,
And through the gate, regardless of the
King.

Turn'd to his native door. Yuhidthiton Follow'd, and Madoe; but in vain their words 360

Essay'd to move the Tiger's steady heart;

When from the door a tottering boy came forth

And clung around his knees with joyful cries,

And called him father. At the joyful sound

Out ran Ilanquel; and the astonish'd man

Beheld his wife and boy, whom sure he deem'd

Whelm'd in the flood; but them the British barks,

Returning homeward from their merciful quest,

Found floating on the waters. . . For a while,

Abandon'd by all desperate thoughts, he stood: 370

Soon he collected, and to Madoc turn'd, And said, O Prince, this woman and her boy

I leave to thee. As thou hast ever found

In me a fearless unrelenting foe,

Fighting with ceaseless zeal his country's cause,

Respect them!.. Nay, Ilanquel! hast thou yet

To learn with what unshakeable resolve My soul maintains its purposes? I leave

To a brave foe's protection. . . Lay me, Madoc,

Here, in my father's grave.

With that he took
His mantle off, and veil'd Ilanquel's
face;...
381

Woman, thou may'st not look upon the Sun,

Who sets to rise no more!.. That done, he placed

His javelin hilt against the ground; the point

He fitted to his heart; and, holding firm

The shaft, fell forward, still with steady hand

Guiding the death-blow on.

So in the land Madoc was left sole Lord; and far away

Yuhidthiton led forth the Aztecas,

To spread in other lands Mexitli's name, 390

And rear a mightier empire, and set

Again their foul idolatry; till Heaven, Making blind Zeal and bloody Avarice Its ministers of vengeance, sent among them

The heroic Spaniard's unrelenting sword.

BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES.

MARY, THE MAID OF THE INN

[First published in *The Oracle*, afterwards in *Poems*, 1797.]

The circumstances related in the following Ballad were told me when a schoolboy, as having happened in the north of England. Either Furnes or Kirkstall Abbey (I forget which) was named as the scene. The original story, however, is in Dr. Plot's History of Staffordshire, p. 291.

The metre is Mr. Lewis's invention; and metre is one of the few things concerning which popularity may be admitted as a proof of merit. The ballad has become popular owing to the metre and the story; and it has been made the subject of a fine

picture by Mr. Barker.

1

Wно is yonder poor Maniac, whose wildly-fix'd eyes

Seem a heart overcharged to express? She weeps not, yet often and deeply she sighs;

She never complains, but her silence implies

The composure of settled distress.

2

No pity she looks for, no alms doth she seek;

Nor for raiment nor food doth she

Through her tatters the winds of the winter blow bleak

On that wither'd breast, and her weather-worn cheek

Hath the hue of a mortal despair. 10

3

Yet cheerful and happy, nor distant the day,

Poor Mary the Maniac hath been; The Traveller remembers who journey'd this way

No damsel so lovely, no damsel so gay, As Mary, the Maid of the Inn. 4

Her cheerful address fill'd the guests with delight

As she welcomed them in with a smile;

Her heart was a stranger to childish affright,

And Mary would walk by the Abbey at night

When the wind whistled down the dark aisle.

5

She loved, and young Richard had settled the day,

And she hoped to be happy for life:

But Richard was idle and worthless, and they

Who knew him would pity poor Mary, and say

That she was too good for his wife.

6

'Twas in autumn, and stormy and dark was the night,

And fast were the windows and door;

Two guests sat enjoying the fire that burnt bright,

And smoking in silence with tranquil delight

They listen'd to hear the wind roar. 30

7

''Tis pleasant,' cried one, 'seated by the fire-side,

To hear the wind whistle without.'

'What a night for the Abbey!' his comrade replied,

'Methinks a man's courage would now be well tried

Who should wander the ruins about.

'I myself, like a school-boy, should tremble to hear

The hoarse ivy shake over my head; And could fancy I saw, half persuaded by fear,

Some ugly old Abbot's grim spirit appear,

For this wind might awaken the dead!'

ç

'I'll wager a dinner,' the other one cried,
'That Mary would venture there now.'

'Then wager and lose!' with a sneer he replied,

'I'll warrant she'd fancy a ghost by her side,

And faint if she saw a white cow.'

10

'Will Mary this charge on her courage allow?'

His companion exclaim'd with a smile;

'I shall win, . . for I know she will venture there now,

And earn a new bonnet by bringing a bough

From the elder that grows in the

11

With fearless good-humour did Mary comply,

And her way to the Abbey she bent; The night was dark, and the wind was high.

And as hollowly howling it swept through the sky.

She shiver'd with cold as she went.

12

O'er the path so well known still proceeded the Maid

Where the Abbey rose dim on the sight;

Through the gateway she enter'd, she felt not afraid,

Yet the ruins were lonely and wild, and their shade

Seem'd to deepen the gloom of the night.

13

All around her was silent, save when the rude blast

Howl'd dismally round the old pile; Over weed-cover'd fragments she fearlessly pass'd,

And arrived at the innermost ruin at last

Where the elder-tree grew in the aisle.

14

Well pleased did she reach it, and quickly drew near,

And hastily gather'd the bough;

When the sound of a voice seem'd to rise on her ear,

She paused, and she listen'd intently, in fear,

And her heart panted painfully now.

15

The wind blew, the hoarse ivy shook over her head, 71

She listen'd . . nought else could she hear;

The wind fell; her heart sunk in her bosom with dread,

For she heard in the ruins distinctly the tread

Of footsteps approaching her near.

16

Behind a wide column half breathless with fear

She crept to conceal herself there:
That instant the moon o'er a dark cloud
shone clear.

And she saw in the moonlight two ruffians appear,

And between them a corpse did they bear.

17

Then Mary could feel her heart-blood curdle cold;

Again the rough wind hurried by, . . It blew off the hat of the one, and behold

Even close to the feet of poor Mary it roll'd, . .

She felt, and expected to die.

18

'Curse the hat!' he exclaims: 'Nay, come on till we hide

The dead body,' his comrade replies.

She beholds them in safety pass on by her side, [supplied,

She seizes the hat, fear her courage And fast through the Abbey she flies.

19

She ran with wild speed, she rush'd in at the door,
She gazed in her terror around,
Then her limbs could support their faint.

Then her limbs could support their faint burthen no more,

And exhausted and breathless she sank on the floor,

Unable to utter a sound.

20

Ere yet her pale lips could the story impart,

For a moment the hat met her view;... Her eyes from that object convulsively start.

For . . what a cold horror then thrilled through her heart

When the name of her Richard she knew! 100

91

Where the old Abbey stands, on the common hard by,

His gibbet is now to be seen;
His irons you still from the road may
espy;

The traveller beholds them, and thinks
with a sigh
()f poor Mary, the Maid of the Inn

Of poor Mary, the Maid of the Inn. Bristol, 1796.

DONICA

[Published in Poems, 1797. The Ballad is founded on stories to be found in the notes to The Hierarchies of the Blessed Angels, a poem by Thomas Heywood, . . 1635.]

High on a rock whose castle shade
Darken'd the lake below,
In ancient strength majestic stood
The towers of Arlinkow.

The fisher in the lake below
Durst never cast his net,
Nor ever swallow in its waves
Her passing wing would wet.

The cattle from its ominous banks
In wild alarm would run,
Though parch'd with thirst, and faint
beneath

The summer's scorching sun.

For sometimes when no passing breeze
The long lank sedges waved,
All white with foam and heaving high
Its deafening billows raved.

And when the tempest from its base The rooted pine would shake, The powerless storm unruffling swept Across the calm dead lake.

And ever then when death drew near
The house of Arlinkow,
Its dark unfathom'd waters sent
Strange music from below.

The Lord of Arlinkow was old, One only child had he, Donica was the Maiden's name, As fair as fair might be.

A bloom as bright as opening morn Suffused her clear white cheek; The music of her voice was mild, Her full dark eyes were meek.

Far was her beauty known, for none So fair could Finland boast; Her parents loved the Maiden much, Young Eberhard loved her most.

Together did they hope to tread
The pleasant path of life,
For now the day drew near to make
Donica Eberhard's wife.

The eve was fair and mild the air,
Along the lake they stray;
The eastern hill reflected bright
The tints of fading day.

And brightly o'er the water stream'd
The liquid radiance wide;
Donica's little dog ran on
And gambol'd at her side.

70

Youth, health, and love bloom'd on her cheek,

Her full dark eves express 50

Her full dark eyes express In many a glance to Eberhard Her soul's meek tenderness.

Nor sound was heard, nor passing gale Sigh'd through the long lank sedge; The air was hush'd, no little wave Dimpled the water's edge:

When suddenly the lake sent forth
Its music from beneath,
And slowly o'er the waters sail'd
The solemn sounds of death.

As those deep sounds of death arose, Donica's cheek grew pale, And in the arms of Eberhard The lifeless Maiden fell.

Loudly the Youth in terror shriek'd, And loud he call'd for aid, And with a wild and eager look Gazed on the lifeless Maid.

But soon again did better thoughts In Eberhard arise, And he with trembling hope beheld The Maiden raise her eyes.

And on his arm reclined she moved
With feeble pace and slow,
And soon with strength recover'd
reach'd
The towers of Arlinkow.

Yet never to Donica's cheeks
Return'd their lively hue;
Her cheeks were deathy white and wan,
Her lips a livid blue;
80

Her eyes so bright and black of yore Were now more black and bright, And beam'd strange lustre in her face So deadly wan and white.

The dog that gambol'd by her side, And loved with her to stray, Now at his alter'd mistress howl'd, And fled in fear away.

Yet did the faithful Eberhard
Not love the Maid the less;
He gazed with sorrow, but he gazed
With deeper tenderness.

And when he found her health unharm'd He would not brook delay, But press'd the not unwilling Maid To fix the bridal day.

And when at length it came, with joy
He hail'd the bridal day,
And onward to the house of God
They went their willing way.

But when they at the altar stood,
And heard the sacred rite,
The hallow'd tapers dimly stream'd
A pale sulphureous light.

And when the Youth with holy warmth Her hand in his did hold, Sudden he felt Donica's hand Grow deadly damp and cold.

But loudly then he shrick'd, for lo!
A Spirit met his view,
And Eberhard in the angel form
His own Donica knew.

That instant from her earthly frame A Daemon howling fled,
And at the side of Eberhard
The livid corpse fell dead.

Bristol, 1796.

RUDIGER

[Published in *Poems*, 1797. The story has been adapted from Thomas Heywood.]

BRIGHT on the mountain's heathy slope The day's last splendours shine, And rich with many a radiant hue Gleam gaily on the Rhine.

And many a one from Waldhurst's walls
Along the river stroll'd,
As ruffling o'er the pleasant stream
The evening gales came cold.

So as they stray'd a swan they saw
Sail stately up and strong,
And by a silver chain he drew
A little boat along.

Whose streamer to the gentle breeze Long floating flutter'd light; Beneath whose crimson canopy There lay reclined a knight.

70

80

QO.

With arching crest and swelling breast
On sail'd the stately swan,
And lightly up the parting tide
The little boat came on. 20

And onward to the shore they drew,
Where having left the knight,
The little boat adown the stream
Fell soon beyond the sight.

Was never a knight in Waldhurst's walls Could with this stranger vie, Was never a youth at aught esteem'd When Rudiger was by.

Was never a maid in Waldhurst's walls
Might match with Margaret; 30
Her cheek was fair, her eyes were dark,
Her silken locks like jet.

And many a rich and noble youth Had sought to win the fair, But never a rich and noble youth Could rival Rudiger.

At every tilt and tourney he Still bore away the prize; For knightly feats superior still, And knightly courtesies.

His gallant feats, his looks, his love, Soon won the willing fair; And soon did Margaret become The wife of Rudiger.

Like morning dreams of happiness
Fast roll'd the months away;
For he was kind and she was kind,
And who so blest as they?

Yet Rudiger would sometimes sit
Absorb'd in silent thought, 50
And his dark downward eye would
seem
With anxious meaning fraught:

But soon he raised his looks again, And smiled his cares away, And mid the hall of gaiety Was none like him so gay.

And onward roll'd the waning months,
The hour appointed came,
And Margaret her Rudiger
Hail'd with a father's name.

But silently did Rudiger
The little infant see;
And darkly on the babe he gazed,—
A gloomy man was he.

And when to bless the little babe
The holy Father came,
To cleanse the stains of sin away
In Christ's redeeming name,

Then did the cheek of Rudiger
Assume a death-pale hue,
And on his clammy forehead stood
The cold convulsive dew;

And faltering in his speech he bade
The Priest the rites delay,
Till he could, to right health restored,
Enjoy the festive day.

When o'er the many-tinted sky
He saw the day decline,
He called upon his Margaret
To walk beside the Rhine;

'And we will take the little babe,
For soft the breeze that blows,
And the mild murmurs of the stream
Will lull him to repose.'

And so together forth they went, The evening breeze was mild, And Rudiger upon his arm Pillow'd the little child.

Many gay companies that eve Along the river roam, But when the mist began to rise, They all betook them home.

Yet Rudiger continued still
Along the banks to roam,
Nor aught could Margaret prevail
To turn his footsteps home.

'Oh turn thee, turn thee, Rudiger!
The rising mists behold,
The evening wind is damp and chill,
The little babe is cold!'

'Now hush thee, hush thee, Margaret, The mists will do no harm, And from the wind the little babe Is shelter'd on my arm.'

150

'Oh turn thee, turn thee, Rudiger!
Why onward wilt thou roam?
The moon is up, the night is cold,
And we are far from home.'

He answer'd not; for now he saw
A Swan come sailing strong,
And by a silver chain he drew
A little boat along.

To shore they came, and to the boat
Fast leapt he with the child,
And in leapt Margaret.. breathless now,
And pale with fear, and wild.

With arching crest and swelling breast
On sail'd the stately Swan,
And lightly down the rapid tide
The little boat went on.

The full orb'd moon, that beam'd around
Pale splendour through the night,
Cast through the crimson canopy
A dim discolour'd light.

And swiftly down the hurrying stream In silence still they sail, And the long streamer fluttering fast Flapp'd to the heavy gale.

And he was mute in sullen thought,
And she was mute with fear,
Nor sound but of the parting tide
Broke on the listening ear.

The little babe began to cry;
Then Margaret raised her head,
And with a quick and hollow voice,
'Give me the child!' she said.

'Now hush thee, hush thee, Margaret, Nor my poor heart distress! I do but pay perforce the price Of former happiness.

'And hush thee too, my little babe!
Thy cries so feeble cease;
Lie still, lie still;...a little while
And thou shalt be at peace.'

So as he spake to land they drew, And swift he stept on shore, And him behind did Margaret Close follow evermore.

It was a place all desolate,
Nor house nor tree was there;
But there a rocky mountain rose,
Barren, and bleak, and bare.

And at its base a cavern yawn'd,
No eye its depth might view,
For in the moon-beam shining round
That darkness darker grew.

Cold horror crept through Margaret's blood,

Her heart it paused with fear,
When Rudiger approach'd the cave,
And cried, 'Lo, I am here!'

A deep sepulchral sound the cave Return'd, 'Lo, I am here!' And black from out the cavern gloom Two giant arms appear.

And Rudiger approach'd, and held
The little infant nigh; [then
Then Margaret shriek'd, and gather'd
New powers from agony.

And round the baby fast and close
Her trembling arms she folds,
And with a strong convulsive grasp
The little infant holds.

'Now help me, Jesus!' loud she cries, And loud on God she calls; Then from the grasp of Rudiger The little infant falls.

The mother holds her precious babe;
But the black arms clasp'd him round,
And dragg'd the wretched Rudiger
Adown the dark profound.

Bristol, 1796.

JASPAR

[First published in The Morning Post, May 3, 1798; afterwards in Poems, vol. ii, 140 1799.]

JASPAR was poor, and vice and want Had made his heart like stone; And Jaspar look'd with envious eyes On riches not his own.

On plunder bent abroad he went Toward the close of day, And loiter'd on the lonely road Impatient for his prey.

No traveller came . . he loiter'd long, And often look'd around, And paused and listen'd eagerly To catch some coming sound.

90

He sate him down beside the stream
That crost the lonely way,
So fair a scene might well have charm'd
All evil thoughts away:

He sate beneath a willow tree
Which cast a trembling shade;
The gentle river full in front
A little island made;

Where pleasantly the moon-beam shone Upon the poplar trees, Whose shadow on the stream below Play'd slowly to the breeze.

He listen'd . . and he heard the wind That waved the willow tree; He heard the waters flow along, And murmur quietly.

He listen'd for the traveller's tread,
The nightingale sung sweet; . . 30
He started up, for now he heard
The sound of coming feet;

He started up and graspt a stake, And waited for his prey; There came a lonely traveller, And Jaspar crost his way.

But Jaspar's threats and curses fail'd The traveller to appal, He would not lightly yield the purse Which held his little all.

Awhile he struggled, but he strove With Jaspar's strength in vain; Beneath his blows he fell and groan'd, And never spake again.

Jaspar raised up the murder'd man, And plunged him in the flood, And in the running water then He cleansed his hands from blood.

The waters closed around the corpse, And cleansed his hands from gore, 50 The willow waved, the stream flow'd on, And murmur'd as before.

There was no human eye had seen The blood the murderer spilt, And Jaspar's conscience never felt The avenging goad of guilt.

And soon the ruffian had consumed The gold he gain'd so ill, And years of secret guilt pass'd on, And he was needy still. One eve beside the alchouse fire He sate as it befell, When in there came a labouring man Whom Jaspar knew full well.

He sate him down by Jaspar's side, A melancholy man, For spite of honest toil, the world Went hard with Jonathan.

His toil a little earn'd, and he
With little was content;
But sickness on his wife had fallen,
And all was well-nigh spent.

Long with his wife and little ones
He shared the scanty meal,
And saw their looks of wretchedness,
And felt what wretches feel.

Their Landlord, a hard man, that day, Had seized the little left, And now the sufferer found himself Of every thing bereft.

He leant his head upon his hand, His elbow on his knee, And so by Jaspar's side he sate, And not a word said he.

'Nay, . . why so downcast?' Jaspar cried,

He took the cup that Jaspar gave, And down he drain'd it quick; 'I have a wife,' said Jonathan, 'And she is deadly sick.

'She has no bed to lie upon,
I saw them take her bed . .
And I have children . . would to God
That they and I were dead!

Our Landlord he goes home to-night,
And he will sleep in peace...
I would that I were in my grave,
For there all troubles cease.

'In vain I pray'd him to forbear,
Though wealth enough has he!
God be to him as merciless
As he has been to me!'

When Jaspar saw the poor man's soul On all his ills intent.

He plied him with the heartening cup, And with him forth he went.

'This Landlord on his homeward road 'Twere easy now to meet.

The road is lonesome, Jonathan! And vengeance, man! is sweet.'

He listen'd to the tempter's voice, The thought it made him start; . . His head was hot, and wretchedness Had harden'd now his heart.

Along the lonely road they went And waited for their prey, They sate them down beside the stream That crost the lonely way.

They sate them down beside the stream And never a word they said, They sate and listen'd silently To hear the traveller's tread.

The night was calm, the night was dark, No star was in the sky,

The wind it waved the willow boughs, The stream flow'd quietly.

The night was calm, the air was still, Sweet sung the nightingale; 130 The soul of Jonathan was soothed, His heart began to fail.

"Tis weary waiting here," he cried, And now the hour is late, . . Methinks he will not come to-night, No longer let us wait.'

' Have patience, man!' the ruffian said, A little we may wait;

But longer shall his wife expect Her husband at the gate.

Then Jonathan grew sick at heart; 'My conscience yet is clear! Jaspar . . it is not yet too late . . I will not linger here.'

'How now!' cried Jaspar, 'why, I thought

Thy conscience was asleep;

No more such qualms, the night is dark, The river here is deep.'

'What matters that,' said Jonathan, Whose blood began to freeze, 'When there is One above whose eye

The deeds of darkness sees?

'We are safe enough,' said Jaspar then, 'If that be all thy fear! Nor eye above, nor eye below, Can pierce the darkness here.'

That instant as the murderer spake There came a sudden light: Strong as the mid-day sun it shone, Though all around was night;

It hung upon the willow tree, It hung upon the flood,

It gave to view the poplar isle, And all the scene of blood.

The traveller who journeys there, He surely hath espied A madman who has made his home Upon the river's side.

His cheek is pale, his eye is wild, His look bespeaks despair; For Jaspar since that hour has made His home unshelter'd there.

And fearful are his dreams at night, And dread to him the day ; He thinks upon his untold crime, And never dares to pray.

The summer suns, the winter storms, O'er him unheeded roll. For heavy is the weight of blood Upon the maniac's soul. 180

Bath, 1798.

ST. PATRICK'S PURGATORY

The last twenty-four stanzas were published in The Morning Post, May 8, 1798.]

This Ballad was published (1801) in the Tales of Wonder, by Mr. Lewis, who found it among the wefts and strays of the Press. He never knew that it was mine; but after his death I bestowed some pains in recomposing it, because he had thought it worth preserving.

It is founded upon the abridged extract which M. le Grand has given in his Fabliaux of a Metrical legend, by Marie de France.

'ENTER, Sir Knight,' the warden cried, And trust in Heaven whate'er betide, Since you have reach'd this bourn; But first receive refreshment due, Twill then be time to welcome you

If ever you return.'

.,

Three sops were brought of bread and wine;
Well might Sir Owen then divine
The mystic warning given,
That he against our ghostly Foe

That he against our ghostly Foe Must soon to mortal combat go, And put his trust in Heaven.

3

Sir Owen pass'd the convent gate, The Warden him conducted straight To where a coffin lay; The Monks around in silence stand, Each with a funeral torch in hand Whose light bedimm'd the day.

4

' Few Pilgrims ever reach this bourn,'
They said, 'but fewer still return; 20
Yet, let what will ensue,
Our duties are prescribed and clear;
Put off all mortal weakness here,
This coffin is for you.

5

'Lio there, while we with pious breath Raise over you the dirge of death, This comfort we can give; Belike no living hands may pay This office to your lifeless clay,

Receive it while you live!

6

Sir Owen in a shroud was drest, They placed a cross upon his breast, And down he laid his head; Around him stood the funeral train, And sung with slow and solemn strain The Service of the Dead.

7

Then to the entrance of the Cave
They led the Christian warrior brave;
Some fear he well might feel,
For none of all the Monks could tell 40
The terrors of that mystic cell,
Its secrets none reveal.

8

'Now enter here,' the Warden cried,
'And God, Sir Owen, be your guide!
Your name shall live in story:
For of the few who reach this shore,
Still fewer venture to explore
St. Patrick's Purgatory.'

Q

Adown the Cavern's long descent, Feeling his way, Sir Owen went, With cautious feet and slow; Unarm'd, for neither sword nor spear, Nor shield of proof avail'd him here Against our ghostly Foe.

10

The ground was moist beneath his tread, Large drops fell heavy on his head, The air was damp and chill, And sudden shudderings o'er him came, And he could feel through all his frame An icy sharpness thrill.

1

Now steeper grew the dark descent; In fervent prayer the Pilgrim went, 'Twas silence all around, Save his own echo from the cell, And the large drops that frequent fell With dull and heavy sound.

12

But colder now he felt the cell,
Those heavy drops no longer fell,
Thin grew the piercing air;
And now upon his aching sight,
There dawn'd far off a feeble light,
In hope he hasten'd there.

13

Emerging now once more to day
A frozen waste before him lay,
A desert wild and wide,
Where ice-rocks in a sunless sky,
On ice-rocks piled, and mountains high,
Were heap'd on every side.

1.1

Impending as about to fall
They seem'd, and had that sight been
all,
80

Enough that sight had been To make the stoutest courage quail; For what could courage there avail Against what then was seen?

15

He saw, as on in faith he past,
Where many a frozen wretch was fast
Within the ice-clefts pent,
Yet living still, and doom'd to bear
In absolute and dumb despair
Their endless punishment.

30

A Voice then spake within his ear, And fill'd his inmost soul with fear, 'O mortal Man,' it said, 'Adventurers like thyself were these!' He seem'd to feel his life-blood freeze, And yet subdued his dread.

17

'O mortal Man,' the Voice pursued,
'Be wise in time! for thine own good
Alone I counsel thee;
Take pity on thyself, retrace
Thy steps, and fly this dolorous place
While yet thy feet are free.

18

'I warn thee once! I warn thee twice! Behold! that mass of mountain-ice Is trembling o'er thy head! One warning is allow'd thee more; O mortal Man, that warning o'er, And thou art worse than dead!'

19

Not without fear, Sir Owen still
Held on with strength of rightcous will,
In faith and fervent prayer;
When at the word, 'I warn thee thrice!'
Down came the mass of mountain ico,
And overwhelm'd him there.

20

Crush'd though, it seem'd, in every bone,
And sense for suffering left alone,
A living hope remain'd;
In whom he had believed, he knew,
And thence the holy courage grew
That still his soul sustain'd.

21

For he, as he beheld it fall,
Fail'd not in faith on Christ to call,
'Lord, Thou canst save!' he cried;
O heavenly help vouchsafed in need,
When perfect faith is found indeed;
The rocks of ice divide.

 22

Like dust before the storm-wind's sway The shiver'd fragments roll'd away, And left the passage free; New strength he feels, all pain is gone, New life Sir Owen breathes, and on 131 He goes rejoicingly. 28

Yet other trials he must meet,
For soon a close and piercing heat
Relax'd each loosen'd limb;
The sweat stream'd out from every part,
In short quick beatings toil'd his heart,
His throbbing eyes grew dim.

24

Along the wide and wasted land
A stream of fire through banks of sand
Its molten billows spread;
Thin vapours tremulously light
Hung quivering o'er the glowing white,
The air he breathed was red.

25

A Paradisc beyond was seen,
Of shady groves and gardens green,
Fair flowers and fruitful trees,
And flowing fountains cool and clear,
Whose gurgling music reach'd his ear
Borne on the burning breeze.

26

How should he pass that molten flood? While gazing wistfully he stood,
A Fiend, as in a dream,
'Thus!' answer'd the unutter'd thought,
Strotch'd forth a mighty arm, and
caught

And cast him in the stream.

27

Sir Owen groan'd, for then he felt His eyeballs burn, his marrow melt, His brain like liquid lead, And from his heart the boiling blood 160 Its agonizing course pursued Through limbs like iron red.

28

Yet, giving way to no despair, But mindful of the aid of prayer, 'Lord, Thou canst save!' he said; And then a breath from Eden came, With life and healing through his frame The blissful influence spread.

29

No Fiends may now his way oppose, The gates of Paradise unclose, Free entrance there is given; And songs of triumph meet his ear, Enrapt, Sir Owen seems to hear The harmonies of Heaven.

30

Come, Pilgrim! take thy foretaste meet,

Thou who hast trod with fearless feet St. Patrick's Purgatory,
For after death these seats divine,
Reward eternal, shall be thine,
And thine eternal glory.'

31

Inobriate with the deep delight, Dim grew the Pilgrim's swimming sight, His sensos died away; And when to life he woke, before The Cavern-mouth he saw once more The light of earthly day.

Westbury, 1798.

THE CROSS ROADS

[Published in *Poems*, vol. ii, 1709.]
The tragedy related in this Ballad happened about the year 1760, in the parish of Bedminster, near Bristol. One who was present at the funeral told me the story and the circumstances of the interment, as I have versified them.

1

There was an old man breaking stones
To mend the turnpike way;
He sate him down beside a brook,
And out his bread and cheese he took,
For now it was mid-day.

2

He leant his back against a post,
His foot the brook ran by;
And there were water-cresses growing,
And pleasant was the water's flowing,
For he was hot and dry.

3

A soldier with his knapsack on Came travelling o'er the down; The sun was strong and he was tired; And he of the old man enquired, 'How far to Bristol town?'

4

Half an hour's walk for a young man, By lanes and fields and stiles; But you the foot-path do not know, And if along the road you go Why then 'tis three good miles.' 2 F

The soldier took his knapsack off,
For he was hot and dry;
And out his bread and cheese he took,
And he sat down beside the brook
To dine in company.

6

'Old friend! in faith,' the soldier says,
'I envy you almost;
My shoulders have been sorely prest,
And I should like to sit, and rest
My back against that post. 30

7

'In such a sweltering day as this A knapsack is the devil And if on t'other side I sat, It would not only spoil our chat, But make me seem uncivil.'

8

The old man laugh'd and moved . . 'I wish

It were a great-arm'd chair!
But this may help a man at need;..
And yet it was a cursed deed
That ever brought it there.

0

'There's a poor girl lies buried here, Beneath this very place. The earth upon her corpse is prest, This post was driven into her breast, And a stone is on her face.'

10

The soldier had but just leant back,
And now he half rose up.
'There's sure no harm in dining here,
My friend? and yet, to be sincere,
I should not like to sup.' 50

11

'God rest her! she is still enough
Who sleeps beneath my feet!'
The old man cried. 'No harm I trow.
She ever did herself, though now
She lies where four roads meet.

-12

60

'I have pass'd by about that hour When men are not most brave; It did not make my courage fail, And I have heard the nightingale Sing sweetly on her grave.

'I have pass'd by about that hour When ghosts their freedom have: But here I saw no ghastly sight, And quietly the glow-worm's light Was shining on her grave.

'There's one who like a Christian lies Beneath the church-tree's shade: I'd rather go a long mile round Than pass at evening through the ground Wherein that man is laid.

'A decent burial that man had, The bell was heard to toll. When he was laid in holy ground. But for all the wealth in Bristol town I would not be with his soul!

'Did'st see a house below the hill Which the winds and the rains destroy? In that farm house did that man dwell.

And I remember it full well When I was a growing boy. 80

'But she was a poor parish girl Who came up from the west: From service hard she ran away, And at that house in evil day Was taken in to rest.

'A man of a bad name was he, An evil life he led : Passion made his dark face turn white, And his grey eyes were large and light, And in anger they grew red.

'The man was bad, the mother worse, Bad fruit of evil stem; 'Twould make your hair to stand on end If I should tell to you, my friend, The things that were told of them!

20

'Did'st see an out-house standing by? The walls alone remain: It was a stable then, but now Its mossy roof has fallen through All rotted by the rain. 100 21

'This poor girl she had served with Some half-a-year or more,

When she was found hung up one day, Stiff as a corpse and cold as clay.

Behind that stable door.

'It is a wild and lonesome place. No hut or house is near: Should one meet a murderer there alone. 'Twere vain to scream, and the dying

Would never reach mortal ear. 110

'And there were strange reports about; But still the coroner found That she by her own hand had died, And should buried be by the way-side, And not in Christian ground.

'This was the very place he chose, Just where these four roads meet: And I was one among the throng That hither follow'd them along, I shall never the sight forget! 120

'They carried her upon a board In the clothes in which she died; I saw the cap blown off her head, Her face was of a dark dark red, Her eyes were starting wide:

'I think they could not have been closed. So widely did they strain. O Lord, it was a ghastly sight,

And it often made me wake at night, When I saw it in dreams again.

'They laid her where these four roads

Here in this very place. The earth upon her corpse was prest. This post was driven into her breast, And a stone is on her face.'

Westbury, 1798.

THE PIOUS PAINTER

[First published in *The Morning Post*, November 2, 1798; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

The legend of the Pious Painter is related in the *Pia Hilaria* of Gazaeus; but the Pious Poet has omitted the second part of the story, though it rests upon quite as good authority as the first. It is to be found in the *Fabliaux* of Le Grand.

THE FIRST PART

1

THERE once was a painter in Catholic days.

Like JoB who eschewed all evil; Still on his Madonnas the curious may

With applause and with pleasure, but chiefly his praise

And delight was in painting the Devil.

2

They were Angels, compared to the Devils he drew,

Who besieged poor St. Anthony's cell:

Such burning hot eyes, such a furnacelike hue!

And round them a sulphurous colouring he threw

That their breath seem'd of brimstone to smell.

3

And now had the artist a picture begun, 'Twas over the Virgin's church-door; She stood on the Dragon embracing her Son:

Many Devils already the artist had done, But this must out-do all before.

4

The Old Dragon's imps as they fled through the air,

At seeing it paused on the wing;
For he had the likeness so just to a hair.
That they came as Apollyon himself
had been there,

To pay their respects to their King. 20

- 5

Every child at beholding it trembled with dread,

And scream'd as he turn'd away quick.

Not an old woman saw it, but, raising her head,

Dropt a bead, made a cross on her wrinkles, and said,

Lord keep me from ugly Old Nick!

6

What the Painter so earnestly thought on by day,

He sometimes would dream of by night;

But once he was startled as sleeping he lay;

'Twas no fancy, no dream, he could plainly survey

That the Devil himself was in sight. 30

7

'You rascally dauber!' old Beelzebub cries,

'Take heed how you wrong me again!

Though your caricatures for myself I despise,

Make me handsomer now in the multitude's eyes,

Or see if I threaten in vain!'

8

Now the Painter was bold, and religious beside,

And on faith he had certain reliance; So carefully he the grim countenance eyed,

And thank'd him for sitting with Catholic pride,

And sturdily bade him defiance. 40

9

Betimes in the morning the Painter arose,

He is ready as soon as 'tis light.

Every look, every line, every feature he knows,

'Tis fresh in his eye, to his labour he

And he has the old Wicked One quite.

10

Happy man! he is sure the resemblance can't fail;

The tip of the nose is like fire,

There's his grin and his fangs, and his dragon-like mail,

And the very identical curl of his tail, . .

So that nothing is left to desire.

11

He looks and retouches again with delight:

'Tis a portrait complete to his mind; And exulting again and again at the sight.

He looks round for applause, and he sees with affright

The Original standing behind.

12

'Fool! Idiot!' old Beelzebub grinn'd as he spoke,

And stampt on the scaffold in ire; The Painter grew pale, for he knew it no joke;

'Twas a terrible height, and the scaffolding broke,

The Devil could wish it no higher. 60

13

'Help . . help! Blessed Mary!' he cried in alarm,

As the scaffold sunk under his feet.

From the canvas the Virgin extended her arm,

She caught the good Painter, she saved him from harm;

There were hundreds who saw in the street.

14

The Old Dragon fled when the wonder he spied,

And cursed his own fruitless endeavour;

While the Painter call'd after his rage to deride,

Shook his pallett and brushes in triumph and cried, 69

'I'll paint thee more ugly than ever!'

THE PIOUS PAINTER

THE SECOND PART

[First published in The Morning Post, July 26, 1799.]

1

THE Painter so pious all praise had acquired

For defying the malice of Hell;

The Monks the unerring resemblance admired;

Not a Lady lived near but her portrait desired

From a hand that succeeded so well.

 2

One there was to be painted the number among

Of features most fair to behold;

The country around of fair Marguerite rung,

Marguerite she was lovely and lively and young,

Her husband was ugly and old. 10

3

O Painter, avoid her! O Painter, take care,

For Satan is watchful for you!

Take heed lest you fall in the Wicked One's snare,

The net is made ready, O Painter, beware Of Satan and Marguerite too.

4

She seats herself now, now she lifts up her head,

On the artist she fixes her eyes;

The colours are ready, the canvas is spread,

He lays on the white, and he lays on the red,

And the features of beauty arise. 20

.5

He is come to her eyes, eyes so bright and so blue!

There's a look which he cannot express;...

His colours are dull to their quicksparkling hue; [view, More and more on the lady he fixes his

On the canvas he looks less and less.

In vain he retouches, her eyes sparkle more,

And that look which fair Marguerite gave!

Many Devils the artist had painted of yore,

But he never had tried a live Angel before, . .

St. Anthony, help him and save! 30

7

He yielded, alas! for the truth must be told,

To the Woman, the Tempter, and Fate.

It was settled the Lady so fair to behold

Should clope from her Husband so ugly and old,

With the Painter so pious of late,

8

Now Satan exults in his vengeance complete,

To the Husband he makes the scheme known;

Night comes and the lovers impatiently meet:

Together they fly, they are seized in the street, 39

And in prison the Painter is thrown.

9

With Repentance, his only companion, he lies.

And a dismal companion is she!
On a sudden he saw the Old Enemy

rise,
'Now, you villainous dauber!' Sit
Beelzebub cries,

'You are paid for your insults to me!

10

'But my tender heart you may easily move,

If to what I propose you agree;

That picture, . . be just! the resemblance improve;

Make a handsomer portrait, your chains I'll remove,

And you shall this instant be free.' 50

11

Overjoy'd, the conditions so easy he hears, [said.

'I'll make you quite handsome!' he He said, and his chain on the Devil appears:

Released from his prison, released from his fears,

The Painter is snug in his bed.

12

At morn he arises, composes his look,
And proceeds to his work as before;
The people beheld him, the culprit they
took;

They thought that the Painter his prison had broke, 59
And to prison they led him once more.

1.5

They open the dungeon; . . behold in his place

In the corner old Beelzebub lay; He smirks and he smiles and he leers with a grace,

That the Painter might catch all the charms of his face,

Then vanish'd in lightning away.

14

Quoth the Painter, 'I trust you'll suspect me no more,

Since you find my assertions were true. But I'll alter the picture above the Church-door, [before, For he never vouchsafed me a sitting And I must give the Devil his due.' 70 Westbury, 1798.

ST. MICHAEL'S CHAIR

[First published in The Morning Post, April 27, 1799; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.

Souther quotes as his authority for the story Whitaker's Supplement to the First and Second Book of Polwhele's History of Cornwall, pp. 6, 7.]

MERRILY, merrily rung the bells,

The bells of St. Michael's tower, When Richard Penlake and Rebecca his

wife

Arrived at St. Michael's door.

Richard Penlake was a cheerful man, Cheerful and frank and free, But he led a sad life with Rebecca his

For a terrible shrew was she.

Richard Penlake a scolding would take, Till patience avail'd no longer, 10 Then Richard Penlake his crab-stick would take.

And show her that he was the stronger.

Rebecca his wife had often wish'd To sit in St. Michael's chair; For she should be the mistress then If she had once sat there.

It chanced that Richard Penlake fell sick,

They thought he would have died; Rebecca his wife made a vow for his life.

As she knelt by his bed-side.

'Now hear my prayer, St. Michael! and spare

My husband's life,' quoth she;
'And to thine altar we will go,
Six marks to give to thee.'

Richard Penlake repeated the vow, For woundily sick was he;

'Save me, St. Michael, and we will go Six marks to give to thee.'

When Richard grew well, Rebecca his wife

Teazed him by night and by day: 30 'O mine own dear! for you I fear, If we the vow delay.'

Merrily, merrily rung the bells,
The bells of St. Michael's tower,
When Richard Penlake and Rebecca
his wife
Arrived at St. Michael's door.

Six marks they on the altar laid, And Richard knelt in prayer: She left him to pray, and stole away To sit in St. Michael's chair.

Up the tower Rebecca ran, Round and round and round; 'Twas a giddy sight to stand a-top, And look upon the ground. 'A curse on the ringers for rocking The tower!' Rebecca cried, As over the church battlements She strode with a long stride.

'A blessing on St. Michael's chair!'
She said as she sat down:
Merrily, merrily rung the bells,
And out Rebecca was thrown.

Tidings to Richard Penlake were brought That his good wife was dead:

'Now shall we toll for her poor soul The great church bell?' they said.

'Toll at her burying,' quoth Richard Penlake,

'Toll at her burying,' quoth he;
'But don't disturb the ringers now
In compliment to me.'

Westbury, 1798.

KING HENRY V AND THE HERMIT OF DREUX

[First published in *The Morning Post*, September 24, 1798; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799.]

'While Henry V lay at the siege of Dreux, an honest Hermit, unknown to him, came and told him the great evils he brought on Christendom by his unjust ambition, who usurped the kingdom of France, against all manner of right, and contrary to the will of God; wherefore in his holy name he threatened him with a severe and sudden punishment if he desisted not from his enterprise. Henry took this exhortation either as an idle whimsey, or a suggestion of the dauphin's, and was but the more confirmed in his design. But the blow soon followed the threatening; for within some few months after he was smitten with a strange and incurable disease.'—Mezeray.

HE pass'd unquestion'd through the

Their heads the soldiers bent
In silent reverence, or begg'd
A blessing as he went;
And so the Hermit pass'd along
And reach'd the royal tent.

King Henry sate in his tent alone,
The map before him lay,
Fresh conquests he was planning there
To grace the future day.

KING HENRY V AND THE HERMIT OF DREUX 625

20

King Henry lifted up his eyes
The intruder to behold;
With reverence he the hermit saw,
For the holy man was old,
His look was gentle as a Saint's,
And yet his eye was bold.

- 'Repent thee, Henry, of the wrongs Which thou hast done this land! O King, repent in time, for know The judgement is at hand.
- 'I have pass'd forty years of peace Beside the river Blaise, But what a weight of woe hast thou Laid on my latter days!
- 'I used to see along the stream
 The white sail gliding down,
 That wafted food in better times
 To yonder peaceful town.
- 'Henry! I never now behold
 The white sail gliding down;
 Famine, Disease, and Death, and Thou
 Destroy that wretched town.
- 'I used to hear the traveller's voice As here he pass'd along, Or maiden as she loiter'd home Singing her even-song.
- 'No traveller's voice may now be heard, In fear he hastens by; But I have heard the village maid In vain for speequr cry.
- 'I used to see the youths row down And watch the dripping oar, As pleasantly their viol's tones Came soften'd to the shore.
- 'King Henry, many a blacken'd corpse I now see floating down! Thou man of blood! repent in time, And leave this leaguer'd town.'
- 'I shall go on,' King Henry cried,
 'And conquer this good land; 50
 Seest thou not, Hermit, that the Lord
 Hath given it to my hand?'

The Hermit heard King Henry speak, And angrily look'd down;... His face was gentle, and for that More solemn was his frown. 'What if no miracle from Heaven
The murderer's arm controul,
Think you for that the weight of blood
Lies lighter on his soul?
6c

'Thou conqueror King, repent in time.
Or dread the coming woe!
For, Henry, thou hast heard the threat
And soon shalt feel the blow!'

King Henry forced a careless smile, As the Hermit went his way; But Henry soon remember'd him Upon his dying day. Westbury, 1798.

CORNELIUS AGRIPPA

A BALLAD OF A YOUNG MAN THAT WOULD READ UNLAWFUL BOOKS, AND HOW HE WAS PUNISHED.

VERY PITHY AND PROFITABLE.

[First published in The Morning Post; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805.]

CORNELIUS AGRIPPA went out one day, His Study he lock'd ere he went away, And he gave the key of the door to his wife.

And charged her to keep it lock'd on her life.

'And if any one ask my Study to see, I charge you to trust them not with the key;

Whoever may beg, and entreat, and implore,

On your life let nobody enter that door.'

There lived a young man in the house, who in vain

Access to that Study had sought to obtain;

And he begg'd and pray'd the books to see,

Till the foolish woman gave him the key.

On the Study-table a book there lay, Which Agrippa himself had been reading that day;

The letters were written with blood therein, [skin; And the leaves were made of dead men's And these horrible leaves of magic between

Were the ugliest pictures that ever were seen,

The likeness of things so foul to behold.

That what they were is not fit to be told.

The young man, he began to read

He knew not what, but he would proceed,

When there was heard a sound at the door,

Which as he read on grew more and more.

And more and more the knocking grew,

The young man knew not what to do: But trembling in fear he sat within, Till the door was broke, and the Devil

came in.

Two hideous horns on his head he had got,

Like iron heated nine times red-hot; 30 The breath of his nostrils was brimstone blue

And his tail like a fiery serpent grew.

'What wouldst thou with me?' the Wicked One cried.

But not a word the young man replied; Every hair on his head was standing upright,

And his limbs like a palsy shook with affright.

'What wouldst thou with me?' cried the Author of ill;

But the wretched young man was silent still;

Not a word had his lips the power to say.

And his marrow seem'd to be melting away.

'What wouldst thou with me?' the third time he cries,

And a flash of lightning came from his eyes,

And he lifted his griffin claw in the air.

And the young man had not strength for a prayer.

His eyes red fire and fury dart As out he tore the young man's heart; He grinn'd a horrible grin at his prey, And in a clap of thunder vanish'd away.

THE MORAL

Henceforth let all young men take heed How in a Conjuror's books they read. 50

Westbury, 1798.

ST. ROMUALD

[First published in *The Morning Post*, February 5, 1799; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1800, and in *Metrical Tales*, 1805.]

Les Catalans ayant appris que S. Romuald vouloit quitter leurs pays, en furent très-afligés; ils délibérèrent sur les moyens de l'en empécher, et le seul qu'ils imaginèrent comme le plus sûr, fut de leur, afin de profiter du moins de ser reliques et des guérisons et autres miracles qu'elles opéreroient après sa mort. La dévotion que les Catalans avoient pour lui, ne plut point de tout à S. Romuald; il usa de stratagème et leur échappa.'--St. Foir, Essais Historiques sur Paris, t. v, p. 163.

One day, it matters not to know How many hundred years ago, A Frenchman stopt at an inn door: The Landlord came to welcome him, and chat

Of this and that,

For he had seen the Traveller there
before.

'Doth holy Romuald dwell Still in his cell?'

The Traveller ask'd, 'or is the old man dead?'

'No; he has left his loving flock, and we

So great a Christian never more shall see,'

The Landlord answer'd, and he shook his head.

'Ah, Sir! we knew his worth!
If ever there did live a saint on earth!...

Why, Sir, he always used to wear a shirt For thirty days, all seasons, day and night:

Good man, he knew it was not right For Dust and Ashes to fall out with Dirt!

And then he only hung it out in the rain, And put it on again. 20

'There has been perilous work With him and the Devil there in yonder cell;

For Satan used to maul him like a Turk.

There they would sometimes fight
All through a winter's night,
From sun-set until morn,

He with a cross, the Devil with his horn; The Devil spitting fire with might and main

Enough to make St. Michael half afraid: He splashing holy water till he made 30 His red hide hiss again,

And the hot vapour fill'd the smoking cell.

This was so common that his face became All black and yellow with the brimstone flame,

And then he smelt, . . O Lord! how he did smell!

Then, Sir! to see how he would mortify

The flesh! If any one had dainty fare,
Good man, he would come there,
And look at all the delicate things, and

And look at all the delicate things, and cry,

"O Belly, Belly, 40
You would be gormandizing now, I know;
But it shall not be so!..

Home to your bread and water..home, I tell ye!"'

'But,' quoth the Traveller, 'wherefore did he leave

A flock that knew his saintly worth so well?

'Why,' said the Landlord, 'Sir, it so befell

He heard unluckily of our intent To do him a great honour: and you know,

He was not covetous of fame below, And so by stealth one night away he went.' 'What might this honour be?' the Traveller cried;

'Why, Sir,' the Host replied,
'We thought perhaps that he might
one day leave us;

And then should strangers have
The good man's grave.

A loss like that would naturally grieve us,

For he'll be made a Saint of to be sure.

Therefore we thought it prudent to
secure

His relics while we might;
And so we meant to strangle him one night.'

Westbury, 1798.

THE ROSE

[Published in *Poems*, vol. ii, 1799. The story on which this poem is based is to be found in *The Voiage and Traivaile of Sir John Maundeville.*]

NAY, Edith! spare the Rose; . . perhaps it lives,

And feels the noontide sun, and drinks refresh'd

The dews of night; let not thy gentle hand

Tear its life-strings asunder, and destroy The sense of being!.. Why that infidel smile?

Come, I will bribe thee to be merciful; And thou shalt have a tale of other days, For I am skill'd in legendary lore,

So thou wilt let it live. There was a time

Ere this, the freshest, sweetest flower that blooms,

Bedeck'd the bowers of earth. Thou hast not heard

How first by miracle its fragrant leaves Spread to the sun their blushing love-

liness.

There dwelt in Bethlehem a Jewish maid,

And Zillah was her name, so passing fair

That all Judea spake the virgin's praise. He who had seen her eyes' dark radiance How it reveal'd her soul, and what a soul

Beam'd in the mild effulgence, woe to

For not in solitude, for not in crowds, 20 Might he escape remembrance, nor avoid

Her imaged form which followed every where.

And fill'd the heart, and fix'd the absent eye.

Alas for him! her bosom own'd no love

Save the strong ardour of religious zeal.

For Zillah on her God had center'd all Her spirit's deep affections. So for her Her tribes-men sigh'd in vain, yet reverenced

The obdurate virtue that destroy'd their hopes.

One man there was, a vain and wretched man, 30

Who saw, desired, despaired, and hated her.

His sensual eye had gloated on her cheek

Even till the flush of angry modesty Gave it new charms, and made him gloat the more.

She loathed the man, for Hamuel's eye was bold.

And the strong workings of brute selfishness

Had moulded his broad features; and she feared

The bitterness of wounded vanity
That with a fiendish hue would over-

His faint and lying smile. Nor vain her fear,

For Hamuel vow'd revenge, and laid a plot

Against her virgin fame. He spread abroad

Whispers that travel fast, and ill reports

That soon obtain belief; how Zillah's

eye,

When in the temple heaven-ward it was raised,

Did swim with rapturous zeal, but there were those

Who had beheld the enthusiast's melting glance

With other feelings fill'd:.. that 'twas

Of easy sort to play the saint by day
Before the public eye, but that all
eves 50

Were closed at night; . . that Zillah's life was foul,

Yea, forfeit to the law.

Shame . . shame to man, That he should trust so easily the tongue

Which stabs another's fame! The ill report

Was heard, repeated, and believed, . . and soon,

For Hamuel by his well-schemed villainy

Produced such semblances of guilt, . . the Maid

Was to the fire condemn'd.

Without the walls, There was a barren field; a place abhorr'd.

For it was there where wretched criminals 60

Receiv'd their death! and there they fix'd the stake,

And piled the fuel round which should consume

The injured Maid, abandon'd, as it seem'd.

By God and Man. The assembled Bethlemites

Beheld the scene, and when they saw the Maid

Bound to the stake, with what calm holiness

She lifted up her patient looks to Heaven.

They doubted of her guilt. With other thoughts

Stood Hamuel near the pile; him savage joy

Led thitherward, but now within his heart 70

Unwonted feelings stirr'd, and the first pangs

Of wakening guilt, anticipant of Hell. The eye of Zillah as it glanced around Fell on the slanderer once, and rested there

A moment: like a dagger did it pierce, And struck into his soul a cureless wound.

Conscience! thou God within us! not in the hour

Of triumph dost thou spare the guilty wretch,

Not in the hour of infamy and death Forsake the virtuous! They draw near the stake, . . . 80

They bring the torch! . . hold, hold your erring hands!

Yet quench the rising flames!.. they rise! they spread!

They reach the suffering Maid! oh God protect

The innocent one!

They rose, they spread, they raged;...
The breath of God went forth; the ascending fire

Beneath its influence bent, and all its

In one long lightning-flash concentrating,

Darted and blasted Hamuel, . . him alone.

Hark! . . what a fearful scream the multitude

Pour forth!.. and yet more miracles!
the stake 90
Branches and buds, and, spreading its

green leaves, Embowers and canopies the innocent

Embowers and canopies the innocent
Maid

Who there stands glorified; and Roses, then

First seen on earth since Paradise was lost,

Profusely blossom round her, white and red

In all their rich variety of hues;

And fragrance such as our first parents breathed

In Eden she inhales, vouchsafed to her A presage sure of Paradise regain'd.

Westbury, 1798.

THE LOVER'S ROCK

[First published in *The Morning Post*, April 18, 1798; afterwards in *The Annual Anthology*, 1799. Southey quotes *Mariana* as his authority for the story.]

THE Maiden through the favouring night From Granada took her flight, She bade her father's house farewell, And fled away with Manuel.

No Moorish maid might hope to vie With Laila's cheek or Laila's eye, No maiden loved with purer truth, Or ever loved a lovelier youth.

In fear they fled across the plain,
The father's wrath, the captive's chain;
In hope to Seville on they flee,
To peace, and love, and liberty.

Chiuma they have left, and now, Beneath a precipice's brow, Where Guadalhorce winds its way, There in the shade awhile they lay;

For now the sun was near its height, And she was weary with her flight; She laid her head on Manuel's breast, And pleasant was the maiden's rest. 20

While thus the lovely Laila slept, A fearful watch young Manuel kept, Alas! her Father and his train He sees come speeding o'er the plain.

The Maiden started from her sleep, They sought for refuge up the steep, To scale the precipice's brow Their only hope of safety now.

But them the angry Father sees, With voice and arm he menaces, 30 And now the Moors approach the steep, Loud are his curses, loud and deep.

Then Manuel's heart grew wild with woe, He loosen'd stones and roll'd below, He loosen'd crags, for Manuel strove For life, and liberty, and love.

The ascent was perilous and high,
The Moors they durst not venture nigh,
The fugitives stood safely there,
They stood in safety and despair.

The Moorish chief unmoved could see His daughter bend her suppliant knee; He heard his child for pardon plead, And swore the offenders both should bleed.

He bade the archers bend the bow, And make the Christian fall below; He bade the archers aim the dart, And pierce the Maid's apostate heart.

The archers aim'd their arrows there, She clasp'd young Manuel in despair, 50 'Death, Manuel, shall set us free! Then leap below and die with me.'

He clasp'd her close and cried farewell, In one another's arms they fell; And falling o'er the rock's steep side, In one another's arms they died.

And side by side they there are laid, The Christian youth and Moorish maid; But never Cross was planted there, Because they perish'd for despair. 60

Yet every Moorish maid can tell Where Laila lies who loved so well, And every youth who passes there, Says for Manuel's soul a prayer.

Westbury, 1798.

GARCI FERRANDEZ

[Published in The Edinburgh Annual Register for 1809. The story is to be found in the Coronica General de España.]

PART I

1

In an evil day and an hour of woe
Did Garci Ferrandez wed!
He wedded the Lady Argentine,
As ancient stories tell,
He loved the Lady Argentine,
Alas! for what befell!

The Lady Argentine hath fled; In an evil day and an hour of woe She hath left the husband who loved her well.

To go to Count Aymerique's bed. 10

2

Garci Ferrandez was brave and young,
The comcliest of the land;

There was never a knight of Leon in fight
Who could meet the force of his
matchless might;

There was never a foe in the infidel band Who against his dreadful sword could stand:

And yet Count Garci's strong right hand Was shapely, and soft, and white; As white and as soft as a lady's hand Was the hand of the beautiful Knight.

2

In an evil day and an hour of woe 21 To Garci's Hall did Count Aymerique

In an evil hour and a luckless night From Garci's Hall did he take his flight, And bear with him that lady bright, That lady false, his bale and bane. There was feasting and joy in Count

Aymerique's bower, When he with triumph, and pomp, and pride,

Brought home the adult'ress like a bride:

His daughter only sate in her tower, She sate in her lonely tower alone, 31 And for her dead mother she made her

'Methinks,' said she, 'my father for me Might have brought a bridegroom home. A stepmother he brings hither instead, Count Aymerique will not his daughter should wed.

But he brings home a leman for his own bed.'

So thoughts of good and thoughts of ill Were working thus in Abba's will;

And Argentine with evil intent 4° Ever to work her woe was bent; That still she sate in her tower alone,

And in that melancholy gloom, When for her mother she made her moan, She wish'd her father too in the tomb.

She watches the pilgrims and poor who wait

For daily food at her father's gate.
'I would some Knight were there,'
thought she,

'Disguised in pilgrim-weeds for me! For Aymerique's blessing I would not stay,

Nor he nor his leman should say me nay, But I with him would wend away.'

5

She watches her handmaid the pittance deal,

They took their dole and went away;
But yonder is one who lingers still
As though he had something in his will,
Some secret which he fain would say;
And close to the portal she sees him go,
He talks with her handmaid in
accents low;

Oh then she thought that time went slow.

And long were the minutes that she must wait

Till her handmaid came from the castle-gate.

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From the castle-gate her handmaid came, And told her that a knight was there, Who sought to speak with Abba the fair, Count Aymerique's beautiful daughter and heir.

She bade the stranger to her bower; His stature was tall, his features bold, A goodlier form might never maid

A goodher form might never hald
At tilt or tourney hope to see; 70
And though in pilgrim-weeds array'd,
Yet noble in his weeds was he,
And did his arms in them enfold
As they were robes of royalty.

7

He told his name to the high-born fair, He said that vengeance led him there. 'Now aid me, lady dear,' quoth he, 'To smite the adult'ress in her pride; Your wrongs and mine avenged shall be, And I will take you for my bride.' 80

He pledged the word of a true Knight,
From out the weeds his hand he drew;
She took the hand that Garci gave,
And then she knew his tale was true,
For she saw the warrior's hand so white,
And she knew the fame of the beautiful
Knight.

PART II

1

'Tis the hour of noon,
The bell of the convent hath done,
And the Sexts are begun;
The Count and his leman are gone to
their meat.

They look to their pages, and lo they see Where Abba, a stranger so long before, The ewer, and bason, and napkin bore; She came and knelt on her bended knee.

And first to her father minister'd she;
Count Aymerique look'd on his
daughter down,
He look'd on her then without a frown.

2

And next to the Lady Argentino Humbly she went and knelt; The Lady Argentine the while A haughty wonder felt; Her face put on an evil smile; 'I little thought that I should see The Lady Abba kneel to me In service of love and courtesy! Count Aymerique,' the leman cried, ' Is she weary of her solitude, Or hath she quell'd her pride? Abba no angry word replied, She only raised her eyes and cried, 'Let not the Lady Argentine Be wroth at ministry of mine!' She look'd at Aymerique and sigh'd; 'My father will not frown, I ween. That Abba again at his board should be seen! Then Aymerique raised her from her

knee,
And kiss'd her eyes, and bade her be
The daughter she was wont to be.

The wine hath warm'd Count Aymerique.
That mood his crafty daughter knew;
She came and kiss'd her father's cheek,
And stroked his beard with gentle
hand.

And winning eye and action bland,
As she in childhood used to do.
'A boon! Count Aymerique,' quoth
she;

'If I have found favour in thy sight, Let me sleep at my father's feet tonight.

Grant this,' quoth she, 'so I shall see
That you will let your Abba be
The daughter she was wont to be.'
With asking eye did Abba speak,
Her voice was soft and sweet;
The wine had warm'd Count Aymerique,
And when the hour of rest was come,
She lay at her father's feet.

4

In Aymerique's arms the adult'ress lay,

Their talk was of the distant day,
How they from Garci fled away
In the silent hour of night;
And then amid their wanton play
They mock'd the beautiful Knight.
Far, far away his castle lay,
The weary road of many a day;
'And travel long,' they said, 'to him,
It seem'd, was small delight;
And he belike was loth with blood 60
To stain his hands so white.'

They little thought that Garci then Heard every scornful word! They little thought the avenging hand Was on the avenging sword! Fearless, unpenitent, unblest,

Fearless, unpenitent, unblest, Without a prayer they sunk to rest, The adulterer on the leman's breast.

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Then Abba, listening still in fear, To hear the breathing long and slow, 70 At length the appointed signal gave, And Garci rose and struck the blow. One blow sufficed for Aymerique,... He made no moan, he utter'd no groan; But his death-start waken'd Argentine,

And by the chamber-lamp she saw
The bloody falchion shine!
She raised for help her in-drawn breath,
But her shriek of fear was her shriek
of death.

- (

In an evil day and an hour of woe 80 Did Garci Ferrandez wed! One wicked wife he has sent to her grave,

He hath taken a worse to his bed. Bristol. 1801.

BISHOP BRUNO

[First published in The Morning Post, November 17, 1798; afterwards in The Annual Anthology, 1799, and in Metrical Tales, 1805. Southey quotes as his authority for the story here versified a passage in Heywood's Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels.]

BISHOP BRUNO awoke in the dead midnight,

And he heard his heart beat loud with affright:

He dreamt he had rung the Palace bell.

And the sound it gave was his passing knell.

Bishop Bruno smiled at his fears so vain, He turn'd to sleep and he dreamt again; He rang at the Palace gate once more, And Death was the Porter that open'd the door.

He started up at the fearful dream, And he heard at his window the screechowl scream;

Bishop Bruno slept no more that night, . .

Oh! glad was he when he saw the daylight!

Now he goes forth in proud array, For he with the Emperor dines to-day; There was not a Baron in Germany That went with a nobler train than heBefore and behind his soldiers ride,
The people throng'd to see their pride;
They bow'd the head, and the knee they
bent.

But nobody blest him as he went. 2

So he went on stately and proud, When he heard a voice that cried aloud, 'Ho! ho! Bishop Bruno! you travel with glee, . .

But I would have you know, you travel to me!'

Behind and before and on either side, He look'd, but nobody he espied; And the Bishop at that grew cold with fear,

For he heard the words distinct and clear.

And when he rang at the Palace bell, He almost expected to hear his knell; 30 And when the Porter turn'd the key, He almost expected Death to see.

But soon the Bishop recover'd his glee, For the Emperor welcomed him royally; And now the tables were spread, and there

Were choicest wines and dainty fare.

And now the Bishop had blest the meat, When a voice was heard as he sat in his seat...

'With the Emperor now you are dining with glee,

But know, Bishop Bruno! you sup with me!'

The Bishop then grew pale with affright, And suddenly lost his appetite; All the wine and dainty cheer Could not comfort his heart that was sick with fear.

But by little and little recovered he, For the wine went flowing merrily, Till at length he forgot his former dread, And his cheeks again grew rosy red.

When he sat down to the royal fare
Bishop Bruno was the saddest man
there; 50
But when the masquers enter'd the hall,
He was the merriest man of all.

Then from amid the masquers' crowd
There went a voice hollow and loud, . .
'You have pass'd the day, Bishop
Bruno, in glee;

But you must pass the night with me!'

His cheek grows pale, and his eye-balls glare,

And stiff round his tonsure bristled his

With that there came one from the masquers' band,

And took the Bishop by the hand. 60

The bony hand suspended his breath, His marrow grew celd at the touch of Death;

On saints in vain he attempted to call, Bishop Bruno fell dead in the Palace hall.

Westbury, 1798.

A TRUE BALLAD OF ST. ANTIDIUS, THE POPE, AND THE DEVIL

[Published in The Morning Post, 1802, or early in 1803. Southey took the subject of this Ballad from the Coronica de España.]

It is Antidius the Bishop
Who now at even tide,
Taking the air and saying a prayer,
Walks by the river side.

The Devil had business that evening, And he upon earth would go; For it was in the month of August, And the weather was close below.

He had his books to settle,
And up to earth he hied,
To do it there in the evening air,
All by the river side.

His imps came flying around him,
Of his affairs to tell;
From the north, and the south, and
the east, and the west;
They brought him the news that he
liked best,

Of the things they had done, And the souls they had won, And how they sped well In the service of Hell.

20

There came a devil posting in Return'd from his employ, Seven years had he been gone from Hell.

And now he came grinning for joy.

'Seven years,' quoth he, 'of trouble and toil

Have I labour'd the Pope to win;
And I to-day have caught him,
He hath done a deadly sin!'
And then he took the Devil's book,
And wrote the deed therein.

Oh, then King Beelzebub for joy, He drew his mouth so wide, You might have seen his iron teeth, Four and forty from side to side.

He wagg'd his ears, he twisted his tail, He knew not for joy what to do, In his hoofs and his horns, in his heels and his corns.

It tickled him all through.

The Bishop who beheld all this, 39 Straight how to act bethought him; He leapt upon the Devil's back, And by the horns he caught him.

And he said a Pater-noster
As fast as he could say,
And made a cross on the Devil's head,
And bade him to Rome away.

Away, away, the Devil flew,
All through the clear moonlight;
I warrant who saw them on their way
He did not sleep that night.

Without bridle, or saddle, or whip, or spur,

Away they go like the wind; The beads of the Bishop are hanging before,

And the tail of the Devil behind.

They met a Witch and she hail'd them, As soon as she came within call; 'Ave Maria!' the Bishop exclaim'd, It frightened her broomstick and she got a fall. He ran against a shooting star,
So fast for fear did he sail, 60
And he singed the beard of the Bishop
Against a Comet's tail;
And he pass'd between the horns of
the Moon.

With Antidius on his back; And there was an eclipse that night, Which was not in the Almanack.

The Bishop just as they set out,
To tell his beads begun;
And he was by the bed of the Pope
Before the string was done.

The Pope fell down upon his knees,
In terror and confusion,
And he confess'd the deadly sin,
And he had absolution.

And all the Popes in bliss that be,
Sung, O be joyful! then;
And all the Popes in bale that be,
They howl'd for envy then;
For they before kept jubilee,
Expecting his good company,
Down in the Devil's den.

But what was this the Pope had done
To bind his soul to Hell?
Ah! that is the mystery of this
wonderful history,
And I wish that I could tell!

But would you know, there you must

You can easily find the way; It is a broad and a well-known road That is travell'd by night and by day. 89

And you must look in the Devil's book; You will find one debt that was never paid yet

If you search the leaves throughout;
And that is the mystery of this
wonderful history,
And the way to find it out.

Bristol, 1802.

HENRY THE HERMIT

[First published in The Morning Post, November 1, 1798; afterwards in Poems, vol. ii, 1799. The story is related in the English Martyrology, 1608.]

1T was a little island where he dwelt, A solitary islet, bleak and bare, Short scanty herbage spotting with dark

spots
Its grey stone surface. Never mariner
Approach'd that rude and uninviting

Approach d that rude and uninviting coast,

Nor ever fisherman his lonely bark

Nor ever fisherman his lonely bark Anchor'd beside its shore. It was a place

Befitting well a rigid anchoret,

Dead to the hopes and vanities and joys, 9

And purposes of life: and he had dwelt Many long years upon that lonely isle; For in ripe manhood he abandon'd arms, Honours and friends and country and the world,

And had grown old in solitude. That isle

Some solitary man in other times Had made his dwelling-place; and Henry found

The little chapel which his toil had built Now by the storms unroof'd, his bed of leaves

Wind-scatter'd; and his grave o'ergrown with grass,

And thistles, whose white seeds there wing'd in vain 20

Wither'd on rocks, or in the waves were lost.

So he repair'd the chapel's ruin'd roof, Clear'd the grey lichens from the altarstone.

And underneath a rock that shelter'd him

From the sea-blast, he built his hermitage.

The peasants from the shore would bring him food,

And beg his prayers; but human converse else

He knew not in that utter solitude;

Nor ever visited the haunts of men, Save when some sinful wretch on a sick bed 30

Implored his blessing and his aid in death.

That summons he delay'd not to obey, Though the night tempest or autumnal wind

Madden'd the waves; and though the mariner,

Albeit relying on his saintly load, Grew pale to see the peril. Thus he lived

A most austere and self-denying man, Till abstinence and age and watchfulness Had worn him down, and it was pain at

To rise at midnight from his bed of leaves

And bend his knees in prayer. Yet not the less,

Though with reluctance of infirmity, Rose he at midnight from his bed of leaves

And bent his knees in prayer; but with more zeal,

More self-condemning fervour, raised his voice

Imploring pardon for the natural sin
Of that reluctance, till the atoning
prayer

Had satisfied his heart, and given it peace,

And the repented fault became a joy.

One night upon the shore his chapelbell 50

Was heard; the air was calm, and its far sounds

Over the water came, distinct and loud. Alarm'd at that unusual hour to hear Its toll irregular, a monk arose,

And crost to the island-chapel. On a stone

Henry was sitting there, dead, cold, and stiff.

The bell-rope in his hand, and at his feet The lamp that stream'd a long unsteady light.

Westbury, 1799.

ST. GUALBERTO

ADDRESSED TO GEORGE BURNETT.

[Published in The Annual Anthology, 1800, and in Metrical Tales, 1805. Southey quotes Villegas, Flos Sanctorum, and other writers, as narrating the stories which he has versified in this ballad.

THE work is done, the fabric is complete:

Distinct the Traveller sees its distant tower.

Yet ere his steps attain the sacred

Must toil for many a league and many an hour.

Elate the Abbot sees the pile and knows.

Stateliest of convents now, his new Moscera rose.

Long were the tale that told Moscera's pride.

Its columns cluster'd strength and lofty state,

How many a saint bedeck'd its sculptured side.

What intersecting arches graced its

Its towers how high, its massy walls how strong,

These fairly to describe were sure a tedious song.

Yet while the fane rose slowly from the ground,

But little store of charity, I ween, The passing pilgrim at Moscera found;

And often there the mendicant was

Hopeless to turn him from the convent-door,

brethren poor.

Now all is finish'd, and from every

They flock to view the fabric, young and old.

Who now can tell Rodulfo's secret pride,

When on the Sabbath-day his eyes behold

The multitudes that crowd his church's

Some sure to serve their God, to see Moscera more?

So chanced it that Gualberto pass'd that way,

Since sainted for a life of saintly deeds.

He paused the new-rear'd convent to survey,

And o'er the structure whilst his eye proceeds.

Sorrow'd, as one whose holier feelings deem

That ill so proud a pile did humble monks beseem.

Him, musing as he stood, Rodulfo

And forth he came to greet the holy guest:

For him he knew as one who held the law

Of Benedict, and each severe behest So duly kept with such religious care, That Heaven had oft vouchsafed its wonders to his prayer.

'Good brother, welcome!' thus Rodulfo cries,

'In sooth it glads me to behold you

It is Gualberto! and mine aged eyes Did not deceive me: yet full many a year

Hath slipt away, since last you bade farewell

Because this costly work still kept the | To me your host and my uncomfortable cell.

''Twas but a sorry welcome then you

And such as suited ill a guest so

The pile was ruinous, the base unsound;

It glads me more to bid you welcome here.

For you can call to mind our former state:

Come, brother, pass with me the new Moscera's gate.'

So spake the cheerful Abbot, but no smile

Of answering joy relax'd Gualberto's brow: He raised his hand and pointed to

the pile,

'Moscera better pleased me then, than now;

A palace this, befitting kingly pride! Will holiness, my friend, in palace pomp abide ?

'Ay,' cries Rodulfo, ''tis a stately place!

And pomp becomes the House of Worship well.

Nay, scowl not round with so severe a face!

When earthly kings in seats of grandeur dwell,

Where art exhausted decks sumptuous hall,

Can poor and sordid huts beseem the Lord of all?'

11

'And ye have rear'd these stately towers on high

To serve your God?' the Monk severe replied.

'It rose from zeal and earnest piety, And prompted by no worldly thoughts beside.'

'Abbot, to him who prays with soul

However poor the cell, God will incline Long as beside its walls the endless his ear.

12

'Rodulfo! while this haughty building rose,

Still was the pilgrim welcome at your door?

Did charity relieve the orphan's woes? Clothed ye the naked? did ye feed the poor?

He who with alms most succours the distrest.

Proud Abbot! know he serves his heavenly Father best.

13

'Did they in sumptuous palaces go dwell

Who first abandon'd all to serve the

Their place of worship was the desert

Wild fruits and berries spread their frugal board.

And if a brook, like this, ran murmuring by.

They blest their gracious God, and "thought it luxury".'

14

Then anger darken'd in Rodulfo's face;

'Enough of preaching,' sharply he replied;

'Thou art grown envious; . . 'tis a common case.

Humility is made the cloak of pride. Proud of our home's magnificence are

But thou art far more proud in rags and beggary.'

With that Gualberto cried in fervent

'O. Father, hear me! If this costly pile

Was for thine honour rear'd, and thine alone,

Bless it, O Father, with thy fostering smile!

Still may it stand, and never evil know.

stream shall flow.

'But, Lord, if vain and worldlyminded men

Have wasted here the wealth which thou hast lent.

To pamper worldly pride; frown on it then!

Soon be thy vengeance manifestly

Let vonder brook, that gently flows beside.

Now from its base sweep down the unholy house of pride!'

He said... and lo, the brook no longer flows!

The waters pause, and now they swell on high;

Erect in one collected heap they rose: The affrighted brethren from Moscera fly,

And upon all the Saints in Heaven they call,

To save them in their flight from that impending fall.

Down the heapt waters came, and, with a sound

Like thunder, overthrown the fabric falls:

Swept far and wide its fragments strew the ground,

Prone lie its columns now, its higharch'd walls.

Earth shakes beneath the onwardrolling tide,

That from its base swept down the unholy house of pride.

19

Were old Gualberto's reasons built on truth,

Dear George, or like Moscera's base unsound? This sure I know, that glad am I, in

[ground; He only play'd his pranks on foreign For had he turn'd the stream on

England too, The Vandal monk had spoilt full many | Fleet-ditch had roll'd up hill to overa goodly view.

20

Then Malmesbury's arch had never met my sight,

Nor Battle's vast and venerable

I had not traversed then with such delight

The hallowed ruins of our Alfred's

Where many a pilgrim's curse is well bestow'd

On those who rob its walls to mend the turnpike road.

21

Wells would have fallen, dear George, our country's pride;

And Canning's stately church been rear'd in vain:

Nor had the traveller Ely's tower descried.

Which when thou seest far o'er the fenny plain.

Dear George, I counsel thee to turn that way,

Its ancient beauties sure will well reward delay.

And we should never then have heard. I think.

At evening hour, great Tom's tremendous knell.

The fountain streams that now in Christ-church stink

Had niagara'd o'er the quadrangle: But, as 'twas beauty that deserved the flood.

I ween, dear George, thy own old Pompey might have stood.

Then had not Westminster, the house of God.

Served for a concert room, or signal-post:

Old Thames, obedient to the father's nod.

Had swept down Greenwich, England's noblest boast;

And, eager to destroy the unholy walls.

whelm St. Paul's.

George, dost thou deem the legendary deeds

Of saints like this but rubbish, a mere store

Of trash, that he flings time away who reads?

And would'st thou rather bid me puzzle o'er

Matter and Mind and all the eternal round.

Plunged headlong down the dark and fathomless profound?

25

Now do I bless the man who undertook

These Monks and Martyrs to biographize;

And love to ponder o'er his ponderous book.

The mingle-mangle mass of truth and lies.

Where waking fancies mixt with dreams appear,

And blind and honest zeal, and holy faith sincere.

26

All is not truth; and yet, methinks, 'twere hard

Of wilful fraud such fablers to accuse;

What if a Monk, from better themes debarr'd,

Should for an edifying story chuse, How some great Saint the Flesh and Fiend o'ercame,

His taste I trow, and not his conscience, were to blame.

27

No fault of his, if what he thus design'd,

Like pious novels for the use of youth,

Obtain'd such hold upon the simple mind

That 'twas received at length for gospel-truth.

A fair account! and should'st thou

A fair account! and should'st thou like the plea,

Thank thou our valued friend, dear George, who taught it me. 28

All is not false which seems at first a lie.

Fernan Antolinez, a Spanish knight, Knelt at the mass, when lo! the troops hard by

Before the expected hour began the fight.

Though courage, duty, honour, summon'd there,

He chose to forfeit all, not leave the unfinish'd prayer.

29

But while devoutly thus the unarm'd knight

Waits till the holy service should be o'er, 170

Even then the foremost in the furious fight

Was he beheld to bathe his sword in gore;

First in the van his plumes were seen to play,

And all to him decreed the glory of the day.

30

The truth is told, and men at once exclaim,

Heaven had his Guardian Angel deign'd to send;

And thus the tale is handed down to fame.

Now if our good Sir Fernan had a friend

Who in this critical season served him well,

Dear George, the tale is true, and yet no miracle.

31

I am not one who scan with scornful eyes

The dreams which make the enthusiast's best delight;

Nor thou the legendary lore despise If of Gualberto yet again I write,

How first impell'd he sought the convent-cell;

A simple tale it is, but one that pleased me well.

Fortune had smiled upon Gualberto's

The heir of Valdespesa's rich domains:

An only child, he grew in years and worth.

And well repaid a father's anxious pains.

In many a field that father had been tried.

Well for his valour known, and not less known for pride.

33

It chanced that one in kindred near

Was slain by his hereditary foe; Much by his sorrow moved and more by pride,

The father yow'd that blood for blood should flow.

And from his youth Gualberto had been taught

That with unceasing hate should just revenge be sought.

Long did they wait; at length the tidings came

That through a lone and unfrequented way Soon would Anselmo, such the mur-

derer's name, Pass on his journey home, an easy

prey. 'Go,' said the father, 'meet him in the wood!'

And young Gualberto went, and laid in wait for blood.

35

When now the youth was at the forest shade

Arrived, it drew toward the close of

Anselmo haply might be long delay'd, And he, already wearied with his

Beneath an ancient oak his limbs reclined,

And thoughts of near revenge alone It would not hurt thee, George, to join possess'd his mind. 210

36

Slow sunk the glorious sun; a roseate light

Spread o'er the forest from his lingering rays;

The glowing clouds upon Gualberto's Soften'd in shade, . . he could not chuse but gaze:

And now a placid greyness clad the heaven.

Save where the west retain'd the last green light of even.

Cool breathed the grateful air, and fresher now

The fragrance of the autumnal leaves arose:

The passing gale scarce moved the o'erhanging bough,

And not a sound disturb'd the deep repose,

Save when a falling leaf came fluttering by,

Save the near brooklet's stream that murmur'd quietly.

Is there who has not felt the deep delight,

The hush of soul, that scenes like these impart?

The heart they will not soften is not

And young Gualberto was not hard of heart.

Yet sure he thinks revenge becomes him well,

When from a neighbouring church he heard the vesper-bell.

The Romanist who hears that vesper-

Howe'er employ'd, must send a prayer to Heaven.

In foreign lands I liked the custom well.

For with the calm and sober thoughts of even

It well accords; and wert thou journeying there,

that vesper-prayer.

Gualberto had been duly taught to hold

All pious customs with religious care:

And, . . for the young man's feelings were not cold,

He never yet had miss'd his vesperprayer.

But strange misgivings now his heart invade.

And when the vesper-bell had ceased he had not pray'd.

41

And wherefore was it that he had not pray'd?

The sudden doubt arose within his mind.

And many a former precept then he weigh'd,

The words of Him who died to save mankind:

How 'twas the meek who should inherit Heaven,

And man must man forgive, if he would be forgiven.

4:

Troubled at heart, almost he felt a hope,

That yet some chance his victim might delay.

So as he mused, adown the neighbouring slope

He saw a lonely traveller on his way; 250

And now he knows the man so much

abhorr'd, . .

His holier thoughts are gone, he bares the murderous sword.

43

'The house of Valdespesa gives the blow!

Go, and our vengeance to our kinsman tell!'... [foe,

Despair and terror seized the unarm'd And prostrate at the young man's knees he fell,

And stopt his hand and cried, 'Oh, do not take

A wretched sinner's life! mercy, for Jesus' sake!

44

At that most blessed name, as at a spell,

Conscience, the power within him, smote his heart. 260

His hand, for murder raised, unharming fell;

He felt cold sweat-drops on his forehead start:

A moment mute in holy horror stood, Then cried, 'Joy, joy, my God! I have not shed his blood!'

45

He raised Anselmo up, and bade him live,

And bless, for both preserved, that holy name:

And pray'd the astonish'd foeman to forgive

The bloody purpose led by which he came.

Then to the neighbouring church he sped away,

His over-burden'd soul before his God to lay. 270

46

He ran with breathless speed, . . he reach'd the door,

With rapid throbs his feverish pulses swell;...

He came to crave for pardon, to adore For grace vouchsafed; before the cross he fell,

And raised his swimming eyes, and thought that there

He saw the imaged Christ smile favouring on his prayer.

47

A blest illusion! from that very night The Monk's austerest life devout he led:

And still he felt the enthusiast's deep delight,

Seraphic visions floated round his head,

The joys of heaven foretasted fill'd his soul.

And still the good man's name adorns the sainted roll.

Westbury, 1799.

QUEEN MARY'S CHRISTENING

[Southey quotes as his authorities for the story here versified, Zurita, l. ii, c. 59, and La Historia del muy alto è invencible Rey Don Jayme de Aragon, Primero deste Nombre, Uamado El Conquistador...—Valencia, 1584.]

THE first wish of Queen Mary's heart Is, that she may bear a son, Who shall inherit in his time
The kingdom of Aragon.

She hath put up prayers to all the Saints
This blessing to accord,
But chiefly she hath call'd upon
The Apostles of our Lord.

The second wish of Queen Mary's heart
Is to have that son call'd James, ro
Because she thought for a Spanish King
'Twas the best of all good names.

To give him this name of her own will Is what may not be done, For having applied to all the Twelve

She may not prefer the one.

By one of their names she hath vow'd to call

Her son, if son it should be;
But which, is a point whereon she must

The Apostles themselves agree. 20

Already Queen Mary hath to them Contracted a grateful debt, And from their patronage she hoped For these farther blessings yet.

Alas! it was not her hap to be
As handsome as she was good;
And that her husband King Pedro
thought so

She very well understood.

She had lost him from her lawful bed
For lack of personal graces, 30
And by prayers to them, and a pious
deceit,

She had compass'd his embraces.

But if this hope of a son should fail,
All hope must fail with it then,
For she could not expect by a second
device
To compass the King again.

Queen Mary hath had her first heart's wish—

She hath brought forth a beautiful boy;

And the bells have rung, and masses been sung,

And bonfires have blazed for joy. 40

And many's the cask of the good red wine,

And many the cask of the white, Which was broach'd for joy that morning,

And emptied before it was night.

But now for Queen Mary's second heart's wish,

It must be determined now, And Bishop Boyl, her Confessor, Is the person who taught her how.

Twelve waxen tapers he hath had made, In size and weight the same; 50 And to each of these twelve tapers He hath given an Apostle's name.

One holy Nun had bleach'd the wax, Another the wicks had spun; And the golden candlesticks were blest, Which they were set upon.

From that which should burn the longest,

The infant his name must take;
And the Saint who own'd it was to be
His Patron for his name's sake.

A godlier or a goodlier sight
Was nowhere to be seen,
Methinks, that day, in Christendom,
Than in the chamber of that good
Queen

Twelve little altars have been there Erected, for the nonce;

And the twelve tapers are set thereon, Which are all to be lit at once.

Altars more gorgeously drest You nowhere could desire; 70 At each there stood a minist'ring Priest In his most rich attire.

A high altar hath there been raised,
Where the crucifix you see;
And the sacred Pix that shines with gold
And sparkles with jewelry.

Bishop Boyl, with his precious mitre on, Hath taken there his stand, In robes which were embroidered By the Queen's own royal hand.

In one part of the ante-room
The Ladies of the Queen,
All with their rosaries in hand,
Upon their knees are seen.

In the other part of the ante-room
The Chiefs of the realm you behold,
Ricos Omes, and Bishops and Abbots,
And Knights and Barons bold.

Queen Mary could behold all this
As she lay in her state bed;
And from the pillow needed not
To lift her languid head.

One fear she had, though still her heart
The unwelcome thought eschew'd,
That haply the unlucky lot
Might fall upon St. Jude.

But the Saints, she trusted, that ill chance

Would certainly forefend; And moreover there was a double hope Of seeing the wish'd-for end: 100

Because there was a double chance For the best of all good names; If it should not be Santiago himself, It might be the lesser St. James.

And now Bishop Boyl hath said the mass;

And as soon as the mass was done, The priests who by the twelve tapers stood

Each instantly lighted one.

The tapers were short and slender too,
Yet to the expectant throng,
Before they to the socket burnt,
The time, I trow, seem'd long.

The first that went out was St. Peter,
The second was St. John;
And now St. Matthias is going,
And now St. Matthew is gone.

Next there went St. Andrew, There goes St. Philip too; And see! there is an end Of St. Bartholomew. St. Simon is in the snuff;
But it was a matter of doubt
Whether he or St. Thomas could be said
Soonest to have gone out.

There are only three remaining, St. Jude, and the two Sts. James: And great was then Queen Mary's hope For the best of all good names.

Great was then Queen Mary's hope,
But greater her fear, I guess,
When one of the three went out,
And that one was St. James the Less.

They are now within less than quarterinch,

The only remaining two!
When there came a thief in St. James,
And it made a gutter too!

Up started Queen Mary,
Up she sate in her bed:
'I never can call him Judas!'
She claspt her hands and said. 140

'I never can call him Judas!'
Again did she exclaim;
'Holy mother preserve us!
It is not a Christian name!'

She spread her hands and claspt them again,

And the Infant in the cradle Set up a cry, an angry cry, As loud as he was able.

'Holy Mother preserve us!'
The Queen her prayer renew'd; 150
When in came a moth at the window
And flutter'd about St. Jude.

St. James hath fallen in the socket,
But as yet the flame is not out,
And St. Jude hath singed the silly moth
That flutters so blindly about.

And before the flame and the molten wax

That silly moth could kill,
It hath beat out St. Jude with its wings,
And St. James is burning still! 160

Oh, that was a joy for Queen Mary's heart;

The babe is christened James; The Prince of Aragon hath got The best of all good names!

Glory to Santiago,
The mighty one in war!
James he is call'd, and he shall be
King James the Conqueror!

Now shall the Crescent wane, The Cross be set on high In triumph upon many a Mosque; Woe, woe to Mawmetry!

Valencia shall be subdued;
Majorca shall be won;
The Moors be routed every where;
Joy, joy, for Aragon!

Shine brighter now, ye stars, that crown Our Lady del Pilar, And rejoice in thy grave, Cid Campeador Ruy Diez de Bivar! 180

Keswick, 1829.

ROPRECHT THE ROBBER

The story here versified is told by Taylor the Water Poet, in his 'Three Weeks, Three Days, and Three Hours' Observations from London to Hamburgh in Germany; amongst Jews and Gentiles, with Descriptions of Towns and Towers, Castles and Citadels, artificial Gallowses and natural Hangmen; and dedicated for the present to the absent Odcombian Knight Errant, Sir Thomas Coryat.' It is in the volume of his collected works, p. 82, of the third paging.

Collein, which is the scene of this story, is more probably Kollen on the Elbe, in Bohemia, or a town of the same name in Prussia, than Cologne, to which great city the reader will perceive I had good reasons

for transferring it.

PART I

ROPRECHT the Robber is taken at last, In Cologne they have him fast; Trial is over, and sentence past; And hopes of escape were vain he knew, For the gallows now must have its due.

But though pardon cannot here be bought,

It may for the other world, he thought; And so to his comfort, with one consent, The Friars assured their penitent.

Money, they teach him, when rightly given,
Is put out to account with Heaven;
For suffrages therefore his plunder went,
Sinfully gotten, but piously spent.

All Saints, whose shrines are in that city, They tell him, will on him have pity, Seeing he hath liberally paid, In this time of need, for their good aid.

In the Three Kings they bid him confide, Who there in Cologne lie side by side; And from the Eleven Thousand Virgins eke, 20

Intercession for him will they bespeak.

And also a sharer he shall be In the merits of their community; All which they promise, he need not fear, Through Purgatory will carry him clear.

Though the furnace of Babylon could not compare

With the terrible fire that rages there, Yet they their part will so zealously do, He shall only but frizzle as he flies through.

And they will help him to die well, 30 And he shall be hang'd with book and bell:

And moreover with holy water they Will sprinkle him, ere they turn away.

For buried Roprecht must not be, He is to be left on the triple tree: That they who pass along may spy Where the famous Robber is hanging on high.

Seen is that gibbet far and wide From the Rhine and from the Dusseldorff side;

And from all roads which cross the sand, North, south, and west, in that level land.

It will be a comfortable sight To see him there by day and by night; For Roprecht the Robber many a year Had kept the country round in fear.

So the Friars assisted, by special grace, With book and bell to the fatal place; And he was hang'd on the triple tree, With as much honour as man could be. In his suit of irons he was hung. They sprinkled him then, and their psalm they sung:

And turning away when this duty was

They said what a goodly end he had made.

The crowd broke up and went their way; All were gone by the close of day; And Roprecht the Robber was left there Hanging alone in the moonlight air.

The last who look'd back for a parting sight.

Beheld him there in the clear moonlight; But the first who look'd when the morning shone,

Saw in dismay that Roprecht was gone.

PART II

THE stir in Cologne is greater to-day Than all the bustle of yesterday; Hundreds and thousands went out to

The irons and chains, as well as he, Were gone, but the rope was left on the

A wonderful thing! for every one said He had hung till he was dead, dead, dead:

And on the gallows was seen, from noon Till ten o'clock, in the light of the moon.

Moreover the Hangman was ready to swear

He had done his part with all due care; And that certainly better hang'd than he No one ever was, or ever could be.

Neither kith nor kin, to bear him away

And funeral rites in secret pay,

Had he, and none that pains would take, With risk of the law, for a stranger's sake.

So 'twas thought, because he had died so well.

He was taken away by miracle.

But would be again alive be found? 20 Or had he been laid in holy ground?

If in holy ground his relics were laid, Some marvellous sign would show, they said;

If restored to life, a Friar he would be, Or a holy Hermit certainly,

And die in the odour of sanctity.

That thus it would prove they could not doubt.

Of a man whose end had been so devout; And to disputing then they fell About who had wrought this miracle.

Had the Three Kings this mercy shown, Who were the pride and honour of Cologne?

Or was it an act of proper grace,

From the Army of Virgins of British

Who were also the glory of that place?

Pardon, some said, they might presume, Being a kingly act, from the Kings must come;

But others maintain'd that St. Ursula's heart

Would sooner be moved to the merciful

There was one who thought this aid divine

Came from the other bank of the Rhine:

For Roprecht there too had for favour applied,

Because his birth-place was on that side.

To Dusseldorff then the praise might belong,

And its Army of Martyrs, ten thousand strong;

But he for a Dusseldorff man was known.

And no one would listen to him in Cologne,

Where the people would have the whole wonder their own.

The Friars, who help'd him to die so

Put in their claim to the miracle; Greater things than this, as their Annals could tell.

The stock of their merits for sinful men Had done before, and would do again.

'Twas a whole week's wonder in that great town,
And in all places, up the river and

down:

But a greater wonder took place of it then,

For Roprecht was found on the gallows again!

PART III

With that the whole city flocked out to see;

There Roprecht was on the triple tree, Dead, past all doubt, as dead could be; But fresh he was as if spells had charm'd him,

And neither wind nor weather had harm'd him.

While the multitude stood in a muse, One said, I am sure he was hang'd in shoes!

In this the Hangman and all concurr'd; But now, behold, he was booted and spurr'd!

Plainly therefore it was to be seen, 10 That somewhere on horseback he had been;

And at this the people marvelled more

Than at any thing which had happen'd before.

For not in riding trim was he
When he disappear'd from the triple
tree;

And his suit of irons he still was in, With the collar that clipp'd him under the chin.

With that this second thought befell, That perhaps he had not died so well, Nor had Saints perform'd the miracle; But rather there was cause to fear, 21 That the foul Fiend had been busy here!

Roprecht the Robber had long been their curse,

And hanging had only made him worse; For bad as he was when living, they said They had rather meet him alive than dead. What a horse must it be which he had ridden,

No earthly beast could be so bestridden; And when by a hell-horse a dead rider was carried.

The whole land would be fearfully harried!

So some were for digging a pit in the place,

And burying him there with a stone on his face;

And that hard on his body the earth should be press'd,

And exorcists be sent for to lay him at rest.

But others, whose knowledge was greater, opined

That this corpse was too strong to be confined;

No weight of earth which they could lay Would hold him down a single day, If he chose to get up and ride away.

There was no keeping Vampires under ground; 40

And bad as a Vampire he might be found, l'ests against whom it was understood Exorcism never had done any good.

But fire, they said, had been proved to be The only infallible remedy;

So they were for burning the body outright,

Which would put a stop to his riding by night.

Others were for scarching the mystery out,

And setting a guard the gallows about, Who should keep a careful watch, and

Whether Witch or Devil it might be That helped him down from the triple tree.

For that there were Witches in the land, Was what all by this might understand; And they must not let the occasion slip For detecting that cursed fellowship.

Some were for this, and some for that, And some they could not tell for what: And never was such commotion known In that great city of Cologne.

PART IV

PIETER SNOYE was a boor of good renown,

Who dwelt about an hour and a half from the town:

And he, while the people were all in debate,

Went quietly in at the city gate.

For Father Kijf he sought about, His confessor, till he found him out; But the Father Confessor wonder'd to see The old man, and what his errand might be.

The good Priest did not wonder less,
When Pieter said he was come to
confess;

'Why, Pieter, how can this be so? I confessed thee some ten days ago!

'Thy conscience, methinks, may be well at rest,

An honest man among the best; I would that all my flock, like thee, Kept clear accounts with Heaven and me!'

Always before, without confusion, Being sure of easy absolution, Pieter his little slips had summ'd; But he hesitated now, and he haw'd, and humm'd.

And something so strange the Father saw

In Pieter's looks, and his hum and his haw.

That he began to doubt it was something more

Than a trifle omitted in last week's score.

At length it came out, that in the affair Of Roprecht the Robber he had some share;

The Confessor then gave a start in fear-'God grant there have been no witchcraft here!'

Pieter Snoye, who was looking down, With something between a smile and a frown, 30

Felt that suspicion move his bile, And look'd up with more of a frown than a smile. 'Fifty years I, Pieter Snoye,

Have lived in this country, man and boy, And have always paid the Church her due,

And kept short scores with Heaven and you.

'The Devil himself, though Devil he be, Would not dare impute that sin to me; He might charge me as well with heresy: And if he did, here, in this place, 40 I'd call him liar, and spit in his face!'

The Father, he saw, cast a gracious eye, When he heard him thus the Devil defy; The wrath, of which he had eased his mind,

Left a comfortable sort of warmth behind,

Like what a cheerful cup will impart, In a social hour, to an honest man's heart:

And he added, 'For all the witchcraft here,

I shall presently make that matter clear.

'Though I am, as you very well know, Father Kijf, 50

A peaceable man, and keep clear of strife,

It's a queerish business that now I've been in;

But I can't say that it's much of a sin.

'However, it needs must be confess'd, And as it will set this people at rest, To come with it at once was best: Moreover, if I delayed, I thought

That some might perhaps into trouble be brought.

'Under the seal I tell it you, And you will judge what is best to do, 60 That no hurt to me and my son may

No earthly harm have we intended, And what was ill done, has been well mended.

'I and my son Piet Pieterszoon, Were returning home by the light of the moon,

From this good city of Cologne, On the night of the execution day; And hard by the gibbet was our way. 'About midnight it was we were passing by,

My son, Piet Pieterszoon, and I, 70 When we heard a moaning as we came near,

Which made us quake at first for fear.

'But the moaning was presently heard again,

And we knew it was nothing ghostly then;

"Lord help us, father!" Piet Pieterszoon said,

"Roprecht, for certain, is not dead!"

'So under the gallows our cart we drive,

And, sure enough, the man was alive;
Because of the irons that he was in,
He was hanging, not by the neck, but
the chin.
80

'The reason why things had got thus wrong,

Was, that the rope had been left too long:

The Hangman's fault—a clumsy rogue, He is not fit to hang a dog.

'Now Roprecht, as long as the people were there,

Never stirr'd hand or foot in the air; But when at last he was left alone, By that time so much of his strength

was gone, That he could do little more than groan.

Piet and I had been sitting it out, 90 Till a latish hour, at a christening bout;

And perhaps we were rash, as you may think,

And a little soft or so, for drink.

'Father Kijf, we could not bear To leave him hanging in misery there; And 'twas an act of mercy, I cannot but say,

To get him down, and take him away.

'And as you know, all people said
What a goodly end that day he had
made;

So we thought for certain, Father Kijf, That if he were saved he would mend his life.

'My son, Piet Pieterszoon, and I, We took him down, seeing none was nigh:

And we took off his suit of irons with

When we got him home, and we hid him there.

'The secret, as you may guess, was known To Alit, my wife, but to her alone; And never sick man, I dare aver, Was better tended than he was by her.

'Good advice, moreover, as good could be,

He had from Alit my wife, and me; And no one could promise fairer than he: So that we and Piet Pieterszoon our son, Thought that we a very good deed had done.

'You may well think we laughed in our sleeve,

At what the people then seem'd to believe;

Queer enough it was to hear them say, That the Three Kings took Roprecht away:

'Or that St. Ursula, who is in bliss, With her Army of Virgins had done this:

The Three Kings and St. Ursula, too, I warrant, had something better to do.

'Piet Pieterszoon my son, and I, We heard them talk as we stood by, And Piet look'd at me with a comical

eye. We thought them fools, but, as you shall see,

Not over-wise ourselves were we.

'For I must tell you, Father Kijf,
That when we told this to Alit my wife,
She at the notion perk'd up with
delight,
130

And said she believed the people were right.

'Had not Roprecht put in the Saints his hope,

And who but they should have loosen'd the rope,

When they saw that no one could intend To make at the gallows a better end? 'Yes, she said, it was perfectly clear That there must have been a miracle here :

And we had the happiness to be in it, Having been brought there just at the

'And therefore it would become us to

An offering for this favour's sake To the Three Kings and the Virgins too, Since we could not tell to which it was

' For greater honour there could be none Than what in this business the Saints had done

To us and Piet Pieterszoon our son: She talk'd me over, Father Kijf,

With that tongue of hers, did Alit my wife.

'Lord, forgive us! as if the Saints would deign

To come and help such a rogue in grain; When the only mercy the case could

Would have been to make his halter fit!

'That would have made one hanging do In happy season for him too,

When he was in a proper cue;

And have saved some work, as you will see,

To my son Piet Pieterszoon, and me.

'Well, Father, we kept him at bed and board,

Till his neck was cured and his strength restored:

And we should have sent him off this dav With something to help him on his way.

'But this wicked Roprecht, what did he?

Though he had been saved thus mercifully,

Hanging had done him so little good, That he took to his old ways as soon as he could.

'Last night, when we were all asleep, Out of his bed did this gallows-bird creep, Piet Pieterszoon's boots and spurs he put on,

And stole my best horse, and away he was gone

'Now Alit, my wife, did not sleep so

But she heard the horse's feet in the yard;

And when she jogg'd me, and bade me awake.

My mind misgave me as soon as she spake.

'To the window my good woman went, And watch'd which way his course he bent;

And in such time as a pipe can be lit, Our horses were ready with bridle and bit.

'Away, as fast as we could hie, We went, Piet Pieterszoon and I;

And still on the plain we had him in sight;

The moon did not shine for nothing that night.

'Knowing the ground, and riding fast, We came up with him at last,

And-would you believe it? Father Kijf,

The ungrateful wretch would have taken my life.

If he had not miss'd his stroke, with a knife!

'The struggle in no long time was done, Because, you know, we were two to one; But yet all our strength we were fain to try,

Piet Pieterszoon my son, and I.

'When we had got him on the ground, We fastened his hands, and his legs we bound:

And across the horse we laid him then, And brought him back to the house again.

"We have robbed the gallows and that was ill done!"

Said I, to Piet Pieterszoon my son; "And restitution we must make To that same gallows, for justice' sake."

'In his suit of irons the rogue we array'd, And once again in the cart he was laid! Night not yet so far was spent. But there was time enough for our intent;

And back to the triple tree we went.

'His own rope was ready there;
To measure the length we took good care;
And the job which the bungling Hangman begun,
This time, I think, was properly done,
By me and Piet Pieterszoon my son.'

THE YOUNG DRAGON

[Parts I and II were published in Fraser's Magazine, April 1830; Parts III and IV in the issues of the same Magazine for June and July 1830, respectively.]

The legend on which this poem is founded is related in the 'Vida y Hazañas del Gran Tamorlan, con la Descripcion de las Tierras de su Imperio y Señorio, escrita por Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, Camarero del muy alto y Poderoso Señor Don Enrique, Tercero deste Nombre, Rey de Castilla y de Leon; con un Itinerario de lo Sucedido en la Embajada, que por dicho Señor el Rey hizo al dicho Principe, llamado por otro Nombre Tamurbec, Año del Nacimiento de 1403.'

PART I

PITHYRIAN was a Pagan,
An easy-hearted man,
And Pagan sure he thought to end
As Pagan he began;
Thought he, the one must needs be
true,
The old Religion, or the new,
And therefore nothing care I;
I call Diana the Divine;
My daughter worships at the shrine
Of the Christian Goddess, Marv. 10

In this uncertain matter
If I the wrong course take,
Mary to me will mercy show
For my Marana's sake.
If I am right, and Dian bend
Her dreadful bow, or Phoebus send
His shafts abroad for slaughter,
Safe from their arrows shall I be,
And the twin Deities for me
Will spare my dear-loved daughter. 20

If every one in Antioch
Had reasoned in this strain,
It never would have raised alarm
In Satan's dark domain.
But Mary's Image every day
Looks down on crowds who come to pray;
Her votaries never falter:
While Dian's temple is so bare,
That unless her Priestess take good care,
She will have a grass-green altar. 30

Perceiving this, the old Dragon
Inflamed with anger grew; [ills,
Earthquakes and Plagues were common
There needed something new;
Some vengeance so severe and strange
That forepast times in all their range
With no portent could match it:
So for himself a nest he made,
And in that nest an egg he laid,
And down he sate to hatch it.

He built it by the fountain
Of Phlegethon's red flood,
In the innermost abyss, the place
Of central solitude;
Of adamantine blocks unhewn,
With lava scoria interstrewn,
The sole material fitting;
With amianth he lined the nest,
And incombustible asbest,
To bear the fiery sitting.

To bear the fiery sitting. 50

There with malignant patience
He sate in fell despite,
Till this dracontine cockatrice
Should break its way to light.
Meantime his angry heart to cheer,
He thought that all this while no fear
The Antiocheans stood in,
Of what on deadliest vengeance bent
With imperturbable intent
He there for them was brooding. 60

The months of incubation
At length were duly past,
And now the infernal Dragon-chick
Hath burst its shell at last;
At which long-look'd-for sight enrapt,
For joy the father Dragon clapt
His brazen wings like thunder,
So loudly that the mighty sound
Was like an earthquake felt around
And all above and under.

The diabolic youngling
Came out no callow birth,
Puling, defenceless, blind and weak,
Like bird or beast of earth;
Or man, most helpless thing of all
That fly, or swim, or creep, or crawl;

But in his perfect figure; His horns, his dreadful tail, his sting, Scales, teeth, and claws, and every thing Complete and in their vigour. 80

The Old Dragon was delighted, And proud withal to see In what perfection he had hatch'd

In what perfection he had hatch d
His hellish progeny;
And round and round, with fold on fold,

His tail about the imp he roll'd In fond and close enlacement;

And neck round neck with many a turn He coil'd, which was, you may discern, Their manner of embracement. 90

PART II

A voice was heard in Antioch,
Whence utter'd none could know,
But from their sleep it waken'd all,
Proclaiming Woe, woe, woe!
It sounded here, it sounded there,
Within, without, and every where,
A terror and a warning;

A terror and a warning;
Repeated thrice the dreadful word
By every living soul was heard
Before the hour of morning.

And in the air a rushing
Pass'd over, in the night;
And as it pass'd, there pass'd with it
A meteoric light;
The blind that piercing light intense
Felt in their long seal'd visual sense,
With sudden short sensation:
The deaf that rushing in the sky

The astonished Antiocheans
Impatiently await
The break of day, not knowing when
Or what might be their fate.
Alas! what then the people hear,
Only with certitude of fear

Could hear, and that portentous cry

Reach'd them with consternation. 20

Their sinking hearts affrighted;
For in the fertile vale below,
Came news that, in that night of woe,
A Dragon had alighted.

It was no earthly monster
In Libyan deserts nurst;
Nor had the Lerna lake sent forth
This winged worm accurst;
The Old Dragon's own laid egg was this,
The fierce Young Dragon of the abyss,
Who from the fiery fountain,
Through earth's concavities that night
Had made his way, and taken flight
Out of a burning mountain.

A voice that went before him
The cry of woe preferr'd;
The motion of his brazen wings
Was what the deaf had heard;
The flashing of his eyes, that light
The which upon their inward sight
The blind had felt astounded;
What wonder then, when from the wall
They saw him in the vale, if all
With terror were confounded.

50

Compared to that strong armour
Of scales which he was in,
The hide of a rhinoceros
Was like a lady's skin.
A battering ram might play in vain
Upon his head, with might and main,
Though fifty men had work'd it;
And from his tail they saw him fling
Out, like a rocket, a long sting,
When he for pastime jerk'd it.

To whom of Gods or Heroes
Should they for aid apply?
Where should they look for succour now,
Or whither should they fly?
For now no Demigods were found
Like those whose deathless deeds
abound

In ancient song and story;
No Hercules was then on earth,
Nor yet of her St. George's birth
Could Cappadocia glory.

And even these against him

Had found their strength but small;
He could have swallowed Hercules,
Club, lion-skin, and all.
Yea, had St. George himself been there
Upon the fiercest steed that e'er

To battle bore bestrider,
This dreadful Dragon in his might,
One mouthful only, and one bite,

Had made of horse and rider.

They see how unavailing
All human force must prove;
Oh might their earnest prayers obtain
Protection from above!
The Christians sought our Lady's shrine
To invocate her aid divine;
And, with a like emotion,
The Pagans on that fearful day
Took to Diana's fane their way,

But there the offended Goddess
Beheld them with a frown;
The indignant altar heaved itself
And shook their offerings down;
The Priestess with a deathlike hue
Pale as the marble Image grew,
The marble Image redden'd;
And these poor suppliants at the sight
Felt in fresh access of affright
Their hearts within them deaden'd.

And offer'd their devotion.

Behold the marble eyeballs

With life and motion shine!
And from the moving marble lips
There comes a voice divine.
A demon voice, by all the crowd
Distinctly heard, nor low, nor loud,
But deep and clear and thrilling;
And carrying to the soul such dread
That they perforce must what it said
Obey, however unwilling.

Hear! hear! it said, ye people!
The ancient Gods have sent
In anger for your long neglect
This signal punishment.
To mortal Mary vows were paid,
And prayers preferr'd, and offerings
made;

Our temples were deserted; Now, when our vengeance makes ye wise, Unto your proper Deities In fear ye have reverted! 120

Hear now the dreadful judgement
For this which ye have done;
The infernal Dragon will devour
Your daughters, one by one;
A Christian Virgin every day
Ye must present him for his prey,
With garlands deck'd, as meet is:
That with the Christians he begins
Is what, in mercy to your sins,
Ye owe to my entreaties.

Whether, if to my worship
Ye now continue true,
I may, when these are all consumed,
Avert the ill from you:
That on the Ancient Gods depends,
If they be made once more your friends
By your sincere repentance:
But for the present, no delay;
Cast lots among ye, and obey
The inexorable sentence.

140

PART III

Though to the Pagan priesthood
A triumph this might seem,
Few families there were who thus
Could in their grief misdeem;
For oft in those distracted days,
Parent and child went different ways,
The sister and the brother;
And when, in spirit moved, the wife
Chose one religious course of life,
The husband took the other.

Therefore in every household
Was seen the face of fear;
They who were safe themselves, exposed
In those whom they held dear.
The lists are made, and in the urn
The names are placed to wait their turn
For this far worse than slaughter;
And from that fatal urn, the first
Drawn for this dreadful death accurst
Was of Pithyrian's daughter.

20

With Christian-like composure
Marana heard her lot,
And though her countenance at first
Grew pale, she trembled not.
Not for herself the Virgin grieved;
She knew in whom she had believed,
Knew that a crown of glory
In Heaven would recompense her worth,
And her good name remain on earth

The theme of sacred story.

Her fears were for her father,
How he should bear this grief,
Poor wretched heathen, if he still
Remain'd in misbelief;
Her looks amid the multitude,
Who struck with deep compassion stood,
Are seeking for Pithyrian:
He cannot bear to meet her eye. [fly,
Where goest thou? whither wouldst thou
Thou miserable Syrian?

Hath sudden hope inspired him, Or is it in despair That through the throng he made his way

And sped he knew not where? For how could he the sight sustain, When now the sacrificial train Inhumanly surround her! How bear to see her, when with flowers From rosiers and from jasmine bowers They like a victim crown'd her! 50

He knew not why nor whither So fast he hurried thence, But felt like one possess'd by some Controlling influence, Nor turn'd he to Diana's fane, Inly assured that prayers were vain If made for such protection; His pagan faith he now forgot, And the wild way he took was not His own, but Heaven's direction.

He who had never enter'd A Christian church till then, Except in idle mood profane To view the ways of men, Now to a Christian church made straight, And hastened through its open gate, By his good Angel guided, And thinking, though he knew not why, That there some blessed Power on high Had help for him provided.

Wildly he look'd about him On many a form divine, Whose Image o'er its altar stood, And many a sculptured shrine, In which believers might behold Relics more precious than the gold And jewels which encased them, With painful search from far and near Brought to be venerated here Where piety had placed them.

There stood the Virgin Mother Crown'd with a starry wreath, And there the aweful Crucifix Appear'd to bleed and breathe; Martyrs to whom their palm is given, And sainted Maids who now in Heaven With glory are invested: Glancing o'er these his rapid eye Toward one image that stood nigh Was drawn, and there it rested. 90

The countenance that fix'd him Was of a sun-burnt mien. The face was like a Prophet's face Inspired, but yet serene; His arms and legs and feet were bare: The raiment was of camel's hair, That, loosely hanging round him, Fell from the shoulders to the knee; And round the loins, though elsewhere free. 100

A leathern girdle bound him.

With his right arm uplifted The great Precursor stood, Thus represented to the life In carved and painted wood. Below the real arm was laid Within a crystal shrine display'd For public veneration; Not now of flesh and blood... but bone. Sinews, and shrivell'd skin alone, In ghastly preservation. 110

Moved by a secret impulse Which he could not withstand, Let me, Pithyrian cried, adore That blessed arm and hand! This day, this miserable day, My pagan faith I put away, Abjure it and abhor it; And in the Saints I put my trust, And in the Cross; and, if I must, Will die a Martyr for it.

This is the arm whose succour Heaven brings me here to seek! Oh let me press it to my lips, And so its aid bespeak! A strong faith makes me now presume That, when to this unhappy doom A hellish power hath brought her, The heavenly hand whose mortal mould I humbly worship, will unfold Its strength, and save my daughter.

The Sacristan with wonder 131 And pity heard his prayer, And placed the relic in his hand, As he knelt humbly there. Right thankfully the kneeling man To that confiding Sacristan Return'd it, after kissing; And he within its crystal shrine Replaced the precious arm divine, Nor saw that aught was missing. 140

PART IV

On piety audacious!
Oh boldness of belief!
Oh sacrilegious force of faith,
That then inspired the thief!
Oh wonderful extent of love,
That Saints onthroned in bliss above
Should bear such profanation,
And not by some immediate act,
Striking the offender in the fact,
Prevent the perpetration!

But sure the Saint that impulse
Himself from Heaven had sent,
In mercy predetermining
The marvellous event;
So inconceivable a thought.
Seeming with such irreverence fraught,
Could else have no beginning;
Nor else might such a deed be done,
As then Pithyrian ventured on,
Yet had no fear of sinning.

20

Not as that Church he enter'd
Did he from it depart,
Like one bewilder'd by his grief,
But confident at heart;
Triumphantly he went his way
And bore the Holy Thumb away,
Elated with his plunder;
That Holy Thumb which well he knew
Could pierce the Dragon through and
through,
Like Jupiter's own thunder.

Meantime was meek Marana
For sacrifice array'd,
And now in sad procession forth
They led the flower-crown'd Maid.
Of this infernal triumph vain,
The Pagan Priests precede the train,
Oh hearts devoid of pity!
And to behold the abhorr'd event,
At far or nearer distance, went
The whole of that great city.

40

The Christians go to succour
The sufferer with their prayers,
The Pagans to a spectacle
Which dreadfully declares,
In this their over-ruling hour,
Their Gods' abominable power;

Yet not without emotion
Of grief, and horror, and remorse,
And natural piety, whose force
Prevail'd o'er false devotion.

The walls and towers are cluster'd,
And every hill and height
That overlooks the vale, is throng'd
For this accursed sight.
Why art thou joyful, thou green Earth?
Wherefore, ye happy Birds, your mirth
Are ye in carols voicing?
And thou, O Sun, in yon blue sky
How canst thou hold thy course on high
This day, as if rejoicing?

Already the procession
Hath pass'd the city gate,
And now along the vale it moves
With solemn pace sedate.
And now the spot before them lies,
Where waiting for his promised prize
The Dragon's chosen haunt is;
Blacken'd beneath his blasting feet,
Though yesterday a green retreat
Beside the clear Orontes.
70

There the procession halted;
The Priests on either hand
Dividing then, a long array,
In order took their stand.
Midway between, the Maid is left
Alone, of human aid bereft:
The Dragon now hath spied her;
But in that moment of most need,
Arriving breathless with his speed,
Her Father stood beside her.

On came the Dragon rampant,
Half running, half on wing,
His tail uplifted o'er his back
In many a spiral ring;
His scales he ruffled in his pride,
His brazen pennons waving wide
Were gloriously distended;
His nostrils smoked, his eyes flash'd fire,
His lips were drawn, and in his ire
His mighty jaws extended.

On came the Dragon rampant,
Expecting there no check,
And open-mouth'd to swallow both
He stretch'd his burnish'd neck.
Pithyrian put his daughter by,
Waiting for this with watchful eye

And ready to prevent it;
Within arm's length he let him come,
Then in he threw the Holy Thumb,
And down his throat he sent it.

The hugest brazen mortar
That ever yet fired bomb,
Could not have check'd this fiend is hbeast
As did that Holy Thumb.
He stagger'd as he wheel'd short round,
His loose feet scraped along the ground,
To lift themselves unable:
His pennons in their weakness flagg'd,
His tail erected late, now dragg'd,
Just like a long wet cable.

A rumbling and a tumbling
Was heard in his inside,
He gasp'd, he panted, he lay down,
He rolled from side to side:
He moan'd, he groan'd, he snuff'd, he
snored,
He growl'd, he howl'd, he raved, he
roar'd:

But loud as were his clamours,
Far louder was the inward din,
Like a hundred braziers working in
A caldron with their hammers.

The hammering came faster,
More faint the moaning sound,
And now his body swells, and now
It rises from the ground.
Not upward with his own consent,
Nor borne by his own wings he went,
Their vigour was abated;
But lifted no one could tell how
By power unseen, with which he now
Was visibly inflated.

Abominable Dragon,
Now art thou overmatch'd,
And better had it been for thee
That thou hadst ne'er been hatch'd;
For now, distended like a ball
To its full stretch, in sight of all,
The body mounts ascendant;
The head before, the tail behind,
The wings, like sails that want a wind,
On either side are pendant.

Not without special mercy
Was he thus borne on high,
Till he appear'd no bigger than
An Eagle in the sky.

For when about some three miles height, Yet still in perfect reach of sight, Oh, wonder of all wonders! He burst in pieces, with a sound Heard for a hundred leagues around, And like a thousand thunders.

But had that great explosion
Been in the lower sky,
All Antioch would have been laid
In ruins, certainly.
And in that vast assembled rout
Who crowded joyfully about
Pithyrian and his daughter,
The splinters of the monster's hide
Must needs have made on every side
A very dreadful slaughter.

So far the broken pieces
Were now dispersed around,
And shiver'd so to dust, that not
A fragment e'er was found.
The Holy Thumb (so it is thought)
When it this miracle had wrought
At once to Heaven ascended:
As if, when it had thus display'd
Its power, and saved the Christian Maid,
Its work on earth was ended.

But at Constantinople
The arm and hand were shown,
Until the mighty Ottoman
O'erthrew the Grecian throne.
And when the Monks this tale who told
To pious visitors would hold
The holy hand for kissing,
They never fail'd, with faith devout,
In confirmation to point out,
That there the Thumb was missing.

Keswick, 1829.

EPILOGUE TO THE YOUNG DRAGON

I TOLD my tale of the Holy Thumb
That split the Dragon asunder,
And my daughters made great eyes as
they heard,
Which were full of delight and wonder.

With listening lips and looks intent,
There sate an eager boy, [hands,
Who shouted sometimes and clapt his
And could not sit still for joy.

But when I look'd at my Mistress's face, It was all too grave the while; 10 And when I ceased, methought there was more Of reproof than of praise in her smile.

That smile I read aright, for thus

Reprovingly said she,
'Such tales are meet for youthful ears
But give little content to me.

- 'From thee far rather would I hear Some sober, sadder lay, Such as I oft have heard, well pleased
- 'Nay, Mistress mine,' I made reply,
 'The autumn hath its flowers,
 Nor ever is the sky more gay
 Than in its evening hours.

Before those locks were grey.'

- 'Our good old Cat, Earl Tomlemagne, Upon a warm spring day, Even like a kitten at its sport, Is sometimes seen to play.
- 'That sense which held me back in youth From all intemperate gladness, 30 That same good instinct bids me shun Unprofitable sadness.
- 'Nor marvel you if I prefer Of playful themes to sing; The October grove hath brighter tints Than Summer or than Spring:
- ' For o'er the leaves before they fall Such hues hath Nature thrown, That the woods wear in sunless days A sunshine of their own.
- 'Why should I seek to call forth tears?
 The source from whence we weep
 Too near the surface lies in youth,
 In age it lies too deep.
- 'Enough of foresight sad, too much Of retrospect have I; And well for me that I sometimes Can put those feelings by:

'From public ills, and thoughts that
else
Might weigh me down to earth,
That I can gain some intervals
For healthful, hopeful mirth;

'That I can sport in tales which suit Young auditors like these, Yet, if I err not, may content The few I seek to please.

'I know in what responsive minds
My lightest lay will wake
A sense of pleasure, for its own,
And for its author's sake.

'I know the eyes in which the light Of memory will appear; I know the lips which while they read Will wear a smile sincere:

'The hearts to which my sportive song The thought of days will bring, When they and I, whose Winter now Comes on, were in our Spring.

'And I their well known voices too,
Though far away, can hear,
Distinctly, even as when in dreams
They reach the inward ear.

"There speaks the man we knew of yore,"

Well pleased I hear them say, "Such was he in his lighter moods Before our heads were grey.

"Buoyant he was in spirit, quick Of fancy, blithe of heart, And Care and Time and Change have left

Untouch'd his better part."

'Thus say my morning friends who

Are in the vale of years, And I, save such as thus may rise, Would draw no other tears.'

Keswick, 1829.

A TALE OF PARAGUAY

PREFACE

ONE of my friends observed to me in a letter, that many stories which are said to be founded on fact, have in reality been foundered on it. This is the case if there be any gross violation committed or ignorance betrayed of historical manners in the prominent parts of a narrative wherein the writer affects to observe them: or when the ground-work is taken from some part of history so popular and well known that any mixture of fiction disturbs the sense of truth. Still more so, if the subject be in itself so momentous that any alloy of invention must of necessity debase it: but most of all in themes drawn from Scripture, whether from the more familiar or the more awful portions; for when what is true is sacred, whatever may be added to it is so surely felt to be false, that it appears profane.

Founded on fact the Poem is, which is here committed to the world: but whatever may be its defects, it is liable to none of these objections. The story is so singular, so simple, and withal so complete, that it must have been injured by any alteration. How faithfully it has been followed, the reader may perceive if he chooses to consult the abridged translation of Dobrizhoffer's History of the Abipones. . .

[In the original Preface Southey here subjoined a long extract from Dobrizhoffer de Abiponibus, Lib. *Prodromus*, pp. 97-106, which it has not been thought necessary to reprint in the present edition.—ED.]

TO EDITH MAY SOUTHEY

1

EDITH! ten years are number'd, since the day,

Which ushers in the cheerful month of May,

To us by thy dear birth, my daughter dear.

Was blest. Thou therefore didst the name partake

Of that sweet month, the sweetest of the year;

But fitlier was it given thee for the sake

Of a good man, thy father's friend sincere,

Who at the font made answer in thy name.

Thy love and reverence rightly may he claim,

For closely hath he been with me allied In friendship's holy bonds, from that first hour

When in our youth we met on Tejo's side; Bonds which, defying now all Fortune's power,

Time hath not loosen'd, nor will Death divide.

2

A child more welcome, by indulgent Heaven

Never to parents' tears and prayers was given:

For scarcely eight months at thy happy birth

Had pass'd, since of thy sister we were left, . .

Our first-born, and our only babe, bereft.

Too fair a flower was she for this rude
earth!

The features of her beauteous infancy Have faded from me, like a passing cloud,

Or like the glories of an evening sky: And seldom hath my tongue pronounced her name,

Since she was summon'd to a happier sphere.

But that dear love, so deeply wounded

I in my soul with silent faith sincere Devoutly cherish till we meet again.

I saw thee first with trembling thankfulness,

() daughter of my hopes and of my fears! 30

Press'd on thy senseless cheek a troubled kiss,

And breathed my blessing over thee with tears. [alloy; But memory did not long our bliss For gentlenature, who had given relief, Wean'd with new love the chasten'd

heart from grief; And the sweet season minister'd to joy.

4

It was a season when their leaves and flowers [spread; The trees as to an Arctic summer When chilling wintry winds and snowy showers,

Which had too long usurp'd the vernal hours, 40

Like spectres from the sight of morning, fled [May; Before the presence of that joyous

And groves and gardens all the livelong day

Rung with the birds' loud love-songs. Over all.

One thrush was heard from morn till even-fall:

Thy Mother well remembers, when she The happy prisoner of the genial bed, How from yon lofty poplar's topmost spray

At earliest dawn his thrilling pipe was heard;

And, when the light of evening died away, 50

That blithe and indefatigable bird Still his redundant song of joy and love preferr'd.

5

How I have doted on thine infant smiles

At morning, when thine eyes unclosed on mine:

How, as the months in swift succession roll'd.

I mark'd thy human faculties unfold, And watch'd the dawning of the light divine; And with what artifice of playful guiles Won from thy lips with still-repeated wiles

Kiss after kiss, a reckoning often told... 60 Something I ween thou know'st: for

Something I ween thou know'st; for thou hast seen

Thy sisters in their turn such fondness prove, [years

And felt how childhood in its winning The attemper'd soul to tenderness can move.

This thou canst tell; but not the hopes and fears

With which a parent's heart doth overflow, . .

The thoughts and cares inwoven with that love, ...

Its nature and its depth, thou dost not, canst not know.

6

The years which since thy birth have pass'd away

May well to thy young retrospect appear 70 A measureless extent:..like yester-

day [career.
To me, so soon they filled their short
To thee discourse of reason have they

brought,
With sense of time and change; and
something too

Of this precarious state of things have taught,

Where Man abideth never in one stay; And of mortality a mournful thought. And I have seen thine eyes suffused in grief, [grey

When I have said that with autumnal
The touch of eld hath mark'd thy
father's head;

That even the longest day of life is brief, [leaf.

And mine is falling fast into the yellow

7

Thy happy nature from the painful thought

With instinct turns, and scarcely canst thou bear

To hear me name the Grave: Thou knowest not [there! How large a portion of my heart is

The faces which I loved in infancy Are gone; and bosom-friends of riper age, With whom I fondly talk'd of years to come. Summon'd before me to their heri-Are in the better world, beyond the And I have brethren there, and sisters dear. And dearer babes. I therefore needs must dwell Often in thought with those whom still I love so well. Thus wilt thou feel in thy maturer mind: When grief shall be thy portion, thou wilt find Safe consolation in such thoughts as these, . .

A present refuge in affliction's hour. And, if indulgent Heaven thy lot should bless

With all imaginable happiness, Here shalt thou have, my child. beyond all power

Of chance, thy holiest, surest, best

Take therefore now thy Father's latest lay, . .

Perhaps his last; . . and treasure in thine heart

The feelings that its musing strains convey.

A song it is of life's declining day, Yet meet for youth. Vain passions to excite.

No strains of morbid sentiment I sing, Nor tell of idle loves with ill-spent breath:

A reverent offering to the Grave I

And twine a garland for the brow of Death.

Keswick, 1814.

PROEM

That was a memorable day for Spain, When on Pamplona's towers, so basely won. the plain The Frenchmen stood, and saw upon Their long-expected succours hasten-

ing on: Exultingly they mark'd the brave And deem'd their leader should his

purpose gain, Though Wellington and England barr'd the way.

Anon the bayonets glitter'd in the sun, And frequent cannon flash'd, whose lurid light

Redden'd through sulphurous smoke; fast volleying round Roll'd the war-thunders, and with long rebound

Backward from many a rock and cloud-capt height

In answering peals Pyrene sent th sound.

Impatient for relief, toward the fight The hungry garrison their eye-balls strain:

Vain was the Frenchman's skill, his valour vain:

And even then, when eager hope [praver. Had moved their irreligious lips to

Averting from the fatal scene their [despair. sight, They breathed the execrations of For Wellesley's star hath risen

ascendant there: Once more he drove the host of

France to flight,

And triumph'd once again for God and for the right.

That was a day, whose influence far [a joy and wide The struggling nations felt; it was Wherewith all Europe rung from [time side to side.

Yet hath Pamplona seen in former A moment big with mightier consequence,

Affecting many an age and distant That day it was which saw in her defence,

Contending with the French before her wall,

A noble soldier of Guipuzcoa fall. Sore hurt, but not to death. For when long care

Restored his shatter'd leg and set him free. [formity, He would not brook a slight de-As one who, being gay and debonnair. In courts conspicuous as in camps

must be: So he forsooth a shapely boot must wear: Ilife.

And the vain man, with peril of his Laid the recover'd limb again beneath the knife.

Long time upon the bed of pain he lay Whiling with books the weary hours away;

And from that circumstance and this vain man began, A train of long events their course Whose term it is not given us yet to fname,

Who hath not heard Loyola's sainted Before whom Kings and Nations bow'd the knee?

Thy annals, Ethiopia, might proclaim What deeds arose from that prolific

Europe tell.

But Science too her trophies would display;

Faith give the martyrs of Japan their fame: fdwell

And Charity on works of love would In California's dolorous regions drear; And where, amid a pathless world of wood. [way, Gathering a thousand rivers on his

Huge Orellana rolls his affluent flood: And where the happier sons of Paraguay,

By gentleness and pious art subdued, Bow'd their meek heads beneath the Jesuits' sway, And lived and died in filial servitude.

I love thus uncontroll'd, as in a dream, To muse upon the course of human things:

Exploring sometimes the remotest springs. [gleam; Far as tradition lends one guiding Or following, upon Thought's auda-

cious wings, Into Futurity, the endless stream.

But now, in quest of no ambitious height, I go where Truth and Nature lead my And, ceasing here from desultory

flight, And of dark plots might shuddering In measured strains I tell a Tale of Paraguay.

A TALE OF PARAGUAY

CANTO I

JENNER! for ever shall thy honour'd [blest. Among the children of mankind be Who by thy skill hast taught us how to tame [pest One dire disease, . . the lamentable Which Africa sent forth to scourge the West.

As if in vengeance for her sable brood So many an age remorselessly opprest. For that most fearful malady subdued Receive a poet's praise, a father's And trust in fervent faith, and labour gratitude.

Fair promise be this triumph of an age. When Man, with vain desires no longer blind,

And wise though late, his only war mankind. shall wage Against the miseries which afflict Striving with virtuous heart and strenuous mind [away. Till evil from the earth shall pass Lo, this his glorious destiny assign'd! For that blest consummation let us

as we may.

The hideous malady which lost its

When Jenner's art the dire contagion stav'd.

Among Columbia's sons, in fatal hour Across the wide Atlantic wave convev'd. [plav'd: Its fiercest form of pestilence dis-

Where'er its deadly course the plague

Vainly the wretched sufferer look'd for aid:

Parent from child, and child from parent ran.

For tyrannous fear dissolved all natural bonds of man.

A feeble nation of Guarani race, Thinn'd by perpetual wars, unsubdued.

Had taken up at length a resting-place Among those tracts of lake and swamp and wood, 31 Where Mondai issuing from its

solitude Flows with slow stream to Empa-

lado's bed. It was a region desolate and rude;

But thither had the horde for safety

And being there conceal'd in peace their lives they led.

There had the tribe a safe asylum

Amid those marshes wide and woodlands dense.

With pathless wilds and waters spread around.

And labyrinthine swamps, a sure defence

From human foes, . . but not from pestilence.

The spotted plague appear'd, that direst ill, . .

How brought among them none could tell, or whence;

The mortal seed had lain among them And quicken'd now to work the Lord's And He in whom alone the hopes of man mysterious will.

Alas, it was no medicable grief

Which herbs might reach! Nor could the juggler's power

With all his antic mummeries bring [hour. relief.

Faith might not aid him in that ruling Himself a victim now. The dreadful stour

None could escape, nor aught its force assuage.

The marriageable maiden had her dower

From death; the strong man sunk beneath its rage,

And death cut short the thread of childhood and of age.

No time for customary mourning now:

With hand close-clench'd to pluck the rooted hair.

To beat the bosom, on the swelling Inflict redoubled blows, and blindly The cheeks, indenting bloody furrows

there. The deep-traced signs indelible of

Then to some crag, or bank abrupt, repair, And, giving grief its scope, infuriate The impatient body thence upon the

earth below.

Devices these by poor weak nature taught,

Which thus a change of suffering would obtain;

And, flying from intolerable thought And piercing recollections, would full fain

Distract itself by sense of fleshly pain From anguish that the soul must

else endure. Easier all outward torments to sus-

tain. Than those heart-wounds which only time can cure,

are sure.

None sorrow'd here: the sense of woe was sear'd.

When every one endured his own sore The prostrate sufferers neither hoped nor fear'd;

The body labour'd, but the heart was still:..

So let the conquering malady fulfil Its fatal course, rest cometh at the

end! Passive they lay with neither wish nor For aught but this; nor did they long

That welcome boon from death, the never-failing friend.

10

Who is there to make ready now the

The house that will content from this day forth

Its easy tenant? Who in vestments fit Shall swathe the sleeper for his bed of earth.

Now tractable as when a babe at birth?

Who now the ample funeral urn shall

And burying it beneath his proper hearth

Deposit there with careful hands the dead.

And lightly then relay the floor above his head? 90

11

Unwept, unshrouded, and unsepulchred.

The hammock where they hang for winding sheet

And grave suffices the deserted dead: There from the armadillo's searching feet

Safer than if within the tomb's retreat.

The carrion birds obscene in vain essay To find that quarry: round and round they beat

The air, but fear to enter for their

And from the silent door the jaguar Through Eden when they took their turns away.

12

But nature for her universal law Hath other surer instruments in store. Whom from the haunts of men no wonted awe

Withholds as with a spell. swarms they pour

From wood and swamp: and when their work is o'er.

On the white bones the mouldering roof will fall:

Seeds will take root, and spring in sun and shower:

And Mother Earth ere long with her green pall.

Resuming to herself the wreck, will cover all.

13

Oh! better thus with earth to have their part,

Than in Egyptian catacombs to lie, Age after age preserved by horrid art, In ghastly image of humanity!

Strange pride that with corruption thus would vie!

And strange delusion that would thus maintain

The fleshly form, till cycles shall pass by,

And in the series of the eternal chain, The spirit come to seek its old abode again.

14

One pair alone survived the general

Left in such drear and mournful solitude.

That death might seem a preferable

Not more deprest the Arkite patriarch stood,

When landing first on Ararat he view'd.

Where all around the mountain summits lay,

Like islands seen amid the boundless flood:

Nor our first parents more forlorn than they,

solitary way.

Alike to them, it seem'd in their despair, Whither they wander'd from the infected spot.

Chance might direct their steps: they took no care:

Come well or ill to them, it matter'd not!

Left as they were in that unhappy lot, The sole survivors they of all their race,

They reck'd not when their fate, nor where, nor what, [case,

In this resignment to their hopeless Indifferent to all choice or circumstance of place.

16

That palsying stupor pass'd away ere long.

And, as the spring of health resum'd its power,

They felt that life was dear, and hope was strong.

was strong.
What marvel? 'Twas with them the morning hour,

When bliss appears to be the natural dower

Of all the creatures of this joyous earth;

And sorrow fleeting like a vernal shower [mirth;

Scarce interrupts the current of our Such is the happy heart we bring with us at birth.

17 Though of his nature and his bound-

less love [sense, Erring, yet tutor'd by instinctive They rightly deem'd the Power who rules above [pestilence. Had saved them from the wasting That favouring Power would still be their defence:

Thus were they by their late deliverance taught 150

To place a child-like trust in Providence,

And in their state forlorn they found this thought

Of natural faith with hope and consolation fraught.

18

And now they built themselves a leafy bower, [beside, Amid a glade, slow Mondai's stream Screen'd from the southern blast of piercing power:

Not like their native dwelling, long

and wide,

By skilful toil of numbers edified, The common home of all, their human

nest,

Where threescore hammocks pendant side by side 160
Were ranged and on the ground the

Were ranged, and on the ground the fires were drest;

Alas, that populous hive hath now no living guest!

19

A few firm stakes they planted in the ground,

Circling a narrow space, yet large enow;

These strongly interknit they closed around

With basket-work of many a pliant bough.

The roof was like the sides; the doo. was low,

And rude the hut, and trimm'd with little care, [now;

For little heart had they to dress it Yet was the humble structure fresh and fair, 170

And soon its inmates found that love might sojourn there.

20

Quiara could recall to mind the course Of twenty summers; perfectly he knew

Whate'er his fathers taught of skill or force.

Right to the mark his whizzing lance he threw.

And from his bow the unerring arrow flew [bee

With fatal aim: and when the laden Buzz'd by him in its flight, he could pursue [free

Its path with certain ken, and follow Until he traced the hive in hidden bank or tree. 180

Of answering years was Monnema, Expert in all her sex's household The Indian weed she skilfully could

And in what depth to drop the vellow

She knew, and when around its stem to raise

The lighten'd soil: and well could she prepare

Its ripen'd seed for food, her proper praise : Or in the embers turn with frequent Its succulent head yet green, sometimes

for daintier fare.

And how to macerate the bark she knew. And draw apart its beaten fibres fine. And, bleaching them in sun, and air, and dew.

From dry and glossy filaments entwine

With rapid twirl of hand the lengthening line;

Next, interknitting well the twisted thread. fcombine.

In many an even mesh its knots And shape in tapering length the pensile bed.

Light hammock there to hang beneath the leafy shed.

23

Time had been when, expert in works of clay,

She lent her hands the swelling urn to mould, And fill'd it for the appointed festal

With the beloved beverage which the Quaff'd in their triumph and their joy

The fruitful cause of many an uproar When, in their drunken bravery uncontroll'd.

Some bitter jest awoke the dormant

wounds and death ensued.

24

These occupations were gone by: the skill

Was useless now, which once had been her pride.

Content were they, when thirst impell'd, to fill The dry and hollow gourd from

Mondai's side: The river from its sluggish bed sup-

plied

A draught for repetition all unmeet; Howbeit the bodily want was satisfied, No feverish pulse ensued, nor ireful heat.

Their days were undisturb'd, their natural sleep was sweet.

She too had learnt in youth how best to trim

The honour'd Chief for his triumphal And covering with soft gums the obedient limb

And body, then with feathers over-

In regular hues disposed, a rich displav.

Well-pleased the glorious savage stood and eyed

The growing work; then vain of his array

Look'd with complacent frown from side to side,

Stalk'd with elater step, and swell'd with statelier pride.

Feasts and carousals, vanity and strife.

Could have no place with them in solitude

To break the tenor of their even life. Quiara day by day his game pursued, Searching the air, the water, and the wood.

With hawk-like eye, and arrow sure as fate:

And Monnema prepared the hunter's Cast with him here in this forlorn estate,

And wrath and rage and strife and In all things for the man was she a fitting mate.

The Moon had gather'd oft her monthly store Of light, and oft in darkness left the [bore sky,

Since Monnema a growing burthen Of life and hope. The appointed weeks go by ;

And now her hour is come, and none

To help: but human help she needed none.

A few short throes endured with son. scarce a cry, Upon the bank she laid her new-born

Then slid into the stream, and bathed, and all was done.

Might old observances have there been kept.

Then should the husband to that pensile bed,

Like one exhausted with the birth [head, have crept,

And, laying down in feeble guise his For many a day been nursed and fdue. dieted

With tender care, to childing mothers Certes a custom strange, and yet far

Through many a savage tribe, howe'er it grew,

And once in the old world known as widely as the new.

This could not then be done; he might not lay

The bow and those unerring shafts aside:

Nor through the appointed weeks forego the prev,

Still to be sought amid those regions None being there who should the while provide

That lonely household with their needful food:

So still Quiara through the forest plied His daily task, and in the thickest

Still laid his snares for birds, and still

the chase pursued.

30

But seldom may such thoughts of mingled joy

A father's agitated breast dilate. As when he first beheld that infant

bov. Who hath not proved it, ill can estimate

The feeling of that stirring hour, . . the weight

Of that new sense, the thoughtful, pensive bliss.

In all the changes of our changeful state.

Even from the cradle to the grave, I wis.

The heart doth undergo no change so great as this.

31

A deeper and unwonted feeling fill'd These parents, gazing on their newborn son.

Already in their busy hopes they build On this frail sand. Now let the seasons [done

And let the natural work of time be With them, . . for unto them a child is

And when the hand of Death may reach the one.

The other will not now be left to mourn

A solitary wretch, all utterly forlorn.

Thus Monnema and thus Quiara thought,

Though each the melancholy thought represt;

They could not choose but feel, yet utter'd not

The human feeling, which in hours of

Often would rise, and fill the boding breast

With a dread foretaste of that mournful day,

When, at the inexorable Power's behest,

The unwilling spirit, called perforce Must leave, for ever leave, its dear connatural clay.

Link'd as they were, where each to each was all,

How might the poor survivor hope to

That heaviest loss which one day must befall.

Nor sink beneath the weight of his despair?

Scarce could the heart even for a moment dare

That miserable time to contemplate, When the dread Messenger should find them there.

From whom is no escape, . . and reckless Fate.

Whom it had bound so close, for ever separate.

34

Lighter that burthen lay upon the heart

When this dear babe was born to share their lot:

They could endure to think that they must part.

Then too a glad consolatory thought Arose, while gazing on the child they sought

With hope their dreary prospect to delude. [taught.

Till they almost believed, as fancy How that from them a tribe should spring renew'd,

To people and possess that ample solitude.

35

Such hope they felt, but felt that whatsoe'er [prove, The undiscoverable to come might Unwise it were to let that bootless care Disturb the present hours of peace and love. For they had gain'd a happiness above

The state which in their native horde was known:

No outward causes were there here to move

Discord and alien thoughts; being thus alone

desires were one.

36

Different their love in kind and in degree

From what their poor depraved forefathers knew.

With whom degenerate instincts were left free [pursue, To take their course, and blindly to

Unheeding they the ills that must The bent of brute desire. No moral

Bound the hard husband to his servile Of wives; and they the chance of change might try,

All love destroy'd by such preposterous liberty.

Far other tie this solitary pair Indissolubly bound; true helpmates they,

In joy or grief, in weal or woe to

In sickness or in health, through life's long day;

And reassuming in their hearts her swav

Benignant Nature made the burthen

It was the Woman's pleasure to obey, The Man's to ease her toil in all he might,

So each in serving each obtain'd the best delight.

And as connubial, so parental love Obey'd unerring Nature's order here, For now no force of impious custom strove

Against her law ; . . such as was wont to sear

The unhappy heart with usages severe,

Till harden'd mothers in the grave could lav

Their living babes with no compunctious tear;

monstrous men become, when from the way

From all mankind, their hearts and their Of primal light they turn thro' heathen paths astray.

Deliver'd from this yoke, in them henceforth

The springs of natural love may freely flow:

New joys, new virtues with that happy birth

Are born, and with the growing infant grow.

Source of our purest happiness below Is that benignant law which hath entwined

Dearest delight with strongest duty so, That in the healthy heart and righteous mind Ever they co-exist, inseparably com-

bined.

40

Oh! bliss for them when in that infant face

They now the unfolding faculties descry.

And fondly gazing, trace . . or think they trace

The first faint speculation in that eye, Which hitherto hath roll'd in vacancy! Oh! bliss in that soft countenance

Some mark of recognition, and espy The quiet smile which in the innocent cheek

Of kindness and of kind its consciousness doth speak! 360

For him, if born among their native tribe.

Some haughty name his parents had thought good,

As weening that therewith they should ascribe

The strength of some fierce tenant of the wood.

The water, or the aërial solitude,

Jaguar or vulture, water-wolf or snake.

The beast that prowls abroad in search of blood,

Or reptile that within the treacherous brake

Waits for the prey, uncoil'd, its hunger | In mutilated sounds which parents love to aslake.

42

Now soften'd as their spirits were by

Abhorrent from such thoughts they turn'd away;

And, with a happier feeling, from the They named the Child Yeruti. On a day

When smiling at his mother's breast in play.

They in his tones of murmuring pleasure heard

A sweet resemblance of the stockdove's lav.

Fondly they named him from that gentle bird.

And soon such happy use endear'd the fitting word.

43

Days pass, and moons have wax'd and waned, and still

This dovelet nestled in their leafy Obtains increase of sense, and strength

and will.

As in due order many a latent power Expands, . . humanity's exalted dower : And they, while thus the days serenely Beheld him flourish like a vigorous flower, [head.

Which, lifting from a genial soil its By seasonable suns and kindly showers is fed.

44

Ere long the cares of helpless baby-To the next stage of infancy give

That age with sense of conscious growth endued,

When every gesture hath its proper grace:

Then come the unsteady step, the tottering pace;

And watchful hopes and emulous thoughts appear;

The imitative lips essay to trace

Their words, observant both with eye and car.

to hear.

Serenely thus the seasons pass away; And, oh! how rapidly they seem to fly [to-day With those for whom to-morrow like Glides on in peaceful uniformity! 400 Five years have since Yeruti's birth

gone by,
Five happy years! .. and, ere the Moon
which then

Hung like a Sylphid's light canoe on high

Should fill its circle, Monnema again Laying her burthen down must bear a mother's pain.

46

Alas, a keener pang before that day:
Must by the wretched Monnema be
borne!

In quest of game Quiara went his way To roam the wilds as he was wont, one morn;

She look'd in vain at eve for his return.

By moonlight through the midnight solitude

She sought him; and she found his garment torn,

His bow and useless arrows in the

Marks of a jaguar's feet, a broken spear, and blood.

CANTO II

1

O THOU who listening to the Poet's song

Dost yield thy willing spirit to his sway,

Look not that I should painfully prolong

The sad narration of that fatal day With tragic details: all too true the lay!

Nor is my purpose e'er to entertain The heart with useless grief; but, as I may.

Blend in my calm and meditative strain [pain.]
Consolatory thoughts, the balm for real

2

O Youth or Maiden, whosoe'er thou art, 10
Safe in my guidance may thy spirit be:

I wound not wantonly the tender heart:

And if sometimes a tear of sympathy Should rise, it will from bitterness be free...

Yea, with a healing virtue be endued, As thou in this true tale shalt hear from me

Of evils overcome, and grief subdued, And virtues springing up like flowers in solitude.

q

The unhappy Monnema, when thus bereft,

Sunk not beneath the desolating

Widow'd she was: but still her child was left;

For him must she sustain the weight of woe,

Which else would in that hour have have laid her low.

Nor wish'd she now the work of death complete:

Then only doth the soul of woman know

Its proper strength, when love and duty meet;

Invincible the heart wherein they have their seat.

1

The seamen, who upon some coral reef Are east amid the interminable main, Still cling to life, and, hoping for relief, Drag on their days of wretchedness and pain.

In turtle shells they hoard the scanty rain,

And eat its flesh, sun-dried for lack of fire,

Till the weak body can no more sus-

Its wants, but sinks beneath its sufferings dire;

[pain. | Most miserable man who sees the rest or real | expire!

He lingers there while months and years go by:

And holds his hope though months and years have past:

And still at morning round the farthest sky,

And still at eve his eagle glance is cast, 40

If there he may behold the far-off

If there he may behold the far-off mast

Arise, for which he hath not ceased to pray.

And if perchance a ship should come at last,

And bear him from that dismal bank away.

He blesses God that he hath lived to see that day.

6

So strong a hold hath life upon the soul.

Which sees no dawning of eternal light,

But subject to this mortal frame's controul.

Forgetful of its origin and right,

Content in bondage dwells and utter night. 50

By worthier ties was this poor mother bound

To life; even while her grief was at the height,

Then in maternal love support she found.

And in maternal cares a healing for her wound.

7

For now her hour is come: a girl is born,

Poor infant, all unconscious of its fate, How passing strange, how utterly forlorn!

The genial season served to mitigate In all it might their sorrowful estate, Supplying to the mother at her door From neighbouring trees, which bent beneath their weight,

A full supply of fruitage now mature, So in that time of need their sustenance was sure. 8

Nor then alone, but alway did the Eye

Of Mercy look upon that lonely bower.

Days pass'd, and weeks and months and years went by;

And never evil thing the while had power

To enter there. The boy in sun and shower

Rejoicing in his strength to youthhed grew;

And Mooma, that beloved girl, a dower 70

Of gentleness from bounteous nature drew.

With all that should the heart of womankind imbue.

9

The tears, which o'er her infancy were shed

Profuse, resented not of grief alone: Maternal love their bitterness allay'd, And with a strength and virtue all its

Sustain'd the breaking heart. A look, a tone,

A gesture of that innocent babe, in

With saddest recollections overflown
Would sometimes make a tender smile
arise.
80

Like sunshine opening thro' a shower in vernal skies.

M

No looks but those of tenderness were found

To turn upon that helpless infant dear;

And, as her sense unfolded, never

Of wrath or discord brake upon her ear.

Her soul its native purity sincere

Possess'd, by no example here defiled; From envious passions free, exempt from fear,

Unknowing of all ill, amid the wild Beloving and beloved she grew, a happy child.

Yea, where that solitary bower was placed,

Though all unlike to Paradise the scene,

(A wide circumference of woodland's waste:)

Something of what in Eden might have been

Was shadow'd there imperfectly, I ween,

In this fair creature: safe from all offence,

Expanding like a shelter'd plant serene,

Evils that fret and stain being far from thence,

Her heart in peace and joy retain'd its innocence.

19

At first the infant to Yeruti proved
A cause of wonder and disturbing joy.
A stronger tie than that of kindred
moved

His inmost being, as the happy boy Felt in his heart of hearts without alloy The sense of kind: a fellow creature she,

In whom, when now she ceased to be a toy

For tender sport, his soul rejoiced to see

Connatural powers expand, and growing sympathy.

13

For her he cull'd the fairest flowers, and sought

Throughout the woods the earliest fruits for her.

The cayman's eggs, the honeycomb he brought

To this beloved sister, . . whatsoe'er, To his poor thought, of delicate or rare

The wilds might yield, solicitous to

They who affirm all natural acts declare

Self-love to be the ruler of the mind, Judge from their own mean hearts, and foully wrong mankind.

14

Three souls in whom no selfishness had place

Were here: three happy souls, which, undefiled,

Albeit in darkness, still retain'd a trace

Of their celestial origin. The wild Was as a sanctuary where Nature smiled

Upon these simple children of her

And, cherishing whate'er was meek and mild,

Call'd forth the gentle virtues, such alone,

The evils which evoke the stronger being unknown.

15

What though at birth we bring with us the seed

Of sin, a mortal taint, . . in heart and will

Too surely felt, too plainly shown in deed, . .

Our fatal heritage; yet are we still The children of the All Merciful; and ill 131

They teach, who tell us that from hence must flow

God's wrath, and then his justice to fulfil,

Death everlasting, never-ending woe:
O miserable lot of man if it were so!

16

Falsely and impiously teach they who thus

Our heavenly Father's holy will misread!

In bounty hath the Lord created us, In love redeem'd. From this authentic creed

Let no bewildering sophistry impede The heart's entire assent, for God is good.

Hold firm this faith, and, in whatever

Doubt not but thou wilt find thy soul endued

With all-sufficing strength of heavenly fortitude!

By nature peccable and frail are we, Easily beguiled; to vice, to error prone:

But apt for virtue too. Humanity
Is not a field where tares and thorns

Are left to spring; good seed hath there been sown

With no unsparing hand. Sometimes the shoot 150

Is choked with weeds, or withers on a stone;

But in a kindly soil it strikes its root,

And flourisheth, and bringeth forth abundant fruit.

18

Love, duty, generous feeling, tenderness.

Spring in the uncontaminated mind; And these were Mooma's natural dower. Nor less

Had liberal Nature to the boy assign'd, Happier herein than if among mankind

Their lot had fallen, . . oh, certes happier here!

That all things tended still more close to bind 160

Their earliest ties, and they from year to year

Retain'd a childish heart, fond, simple, and sincere.

19

They had no sad reflection to alloy The calm contentment of the passing day,

Nor foresight to disturb the present joy.

Not so with Monnema; albeit the sway

Of time had reach'd her heart, and worn away,

At length, the grief so deeply seated

The future often, like a burthen, lay Upon that heart, a cause of secret care

And melancholy thought; yet did she not despair.

20

Chance from the fellowship of human kind

Had cut them off, and chance might reunite.

On this poor possibility her mind

Reposed; she did not for herself invite

The unlikely thought, and cherish with delight

The dream of what such change might haply bring;

Gladness with hope long since had taken flight

From her; she felt that life was on the wing.

And happiness like youth has here no second spring. 180

21

So were her feelings to her lot composed

That to herself all change had now been pain.

For Time upon her own desires had closed;

But in her children as she lived again, For their dear sake she learnt to entertain

A wish for human intercourse renew'd; And oftentimes, while they devour'd

the strain,
Would she beguile their evening soli-

With stories strangely told and strangely understood.

ດດ

Little she knew, for little had she seen, And little of traditionary lore 191 Had reach'd her ear; and yet to them I ween

Their mother's knowledge seem'd a boundless store.

A world it open'd to their thoughts.

A world it open'd to their thoughts, yea more, . .

Another world beyond this mortal

Bereft of her they had indeed been poor,

Being left to animal sense, degenerate, Mere creatures, they had sunk below the beasts' estate.

The human race, from her they under-

Was not within that lonely hut confined.

But distant far beyond their world of

Were tribes and powerful nations of their kind:

And of the old observances which bind People and chiefs, the ties of man and

The laws of kin religiously assign'd. Rites, customs, scenes of riotry and

And all the strange vicissitudes of savage life.

Wondering they listen to the wondrous tale.

But no repining thought such tales excite:

Only a wish, if wishes might avail, Was haply felt, with juvenile delight, To mingle in the social dance at night, Where the broad moonshine, level as a flood. Ilight. O'erspread the plain, and in the silver Well-pleased, the placid elders sate

and view'd The sport, and seem'd therein to feel their youth renew'd.

25

But when the darker scenes their mother drew.

What crimes were wrought when drunken fury raged,

What miseries from their fatal discord

When horde with horde in deadly strife engaged:

The rancorous hate with which their wars they waged,

The more unnatural horrors which ensued.

When, with inveterate vengeance unassuaged,

The victors round their slaughter'd captives stood.

little hands in blood:

26

Horrent they heard; and with her hands the Maid Prest her eyes close as if she strove to The hateful image which her mind portray'd.

The Boy sate silently, intent in thought:

Then with a deep-drawn sigh, as if he

To heave the oppressive feeling from his breast.

Complacently compared their harmless lot

With such wild life, outrageous and unblest: Securely thus to live, he said, was surely

On tales of blood they could not bear to dwell.

From such their hearts abhorrent shrunk in fear.

Better they liked that Monnema should Of things unseen; what Power had placed them here,

And whence the living spirit came, and where

It pass'd, when parted from this mortal mould; 240 Of such mysterious themes with

willing ear

They heard, devoutly listening while she told

Strangely-disfigured truths, and fables feign'd of old.

By the Great Spirit man was made. she said.

His voice it was which peal'd along the sky,

And shook the heavens and fill'd the earth with dread.

Alone and inaccessible, on high

He had his dwelling-place eternally, And Father was his name. This all knew well:

But none had seen his face: and if his eve

Regarded what upon the earth befell, And babes were brought to dip their Or if he cared for man, she knew not : . . who could tell?

But this, she said, was sure, that after

There was reward and there was punishment:

And that the evil doers, when the Of their injurious lives at length was Into all noxious forms abhorr'd were [still

Of beasts and reptiles; so retaining Their old propensities, on evil bent, They work'd where'er they might

their wicked will, The natural foes of man, whom we pursue and kill.

Of better spirits, some there were who gaid

That in the grave they had their place

Lightly they laid the earth upon the dead,

Lest in his narrow tenement the guest Should suffer underneath such load opprest. ffree.

But that death surely set the spirit Sad proof to them poor Monnema addrest.

Drawn from their father's fate; no grave had he

Wherein his soul might dwell. This therefore could not be. 270

31

Likelier they taught who said that to the Land

Of Souls the happy spirit took its flight,

A region underneath the sole com-Of the Good Power; by him for the

upright

Appointed and replenish'd with delight:

A land where nothing evil ever came, Sorrow, nor pain, nor peril, nor affright,

Nor change, nor death; but there the human frame,

Untouch'd by age or ill, continued still | Divorce the soul which there full gladly the same.

32

Winds would not pierce it there, nor heat and cold Grieve, nor thirst parch and hunger

pine; but there

The sun by day its even influence hold With genial warmth, and through the unclouded air

The moon upon her nightly journey fare:

The lakes and fish-full streams are never dry;

Trees ever green perpetual fruitage

And, wheresoe'er the hunter turns his Water and earth and heaven to him their stores supply.

33

And once there was a way to that good land.

For in mid-earth a wondrous Tree there grew,

By which the adventurer might with foot and hand

From branch to branch his upward course pursue; ftrue,

An easy path, if what were said be Albeit the ascent was long: and when the height

Was gain'd, that blissful region was in view.

Wherein the traveller safely might alight,

And roam abroad at will, and take his free delight.

O happy time, when ingress thus was given

To the upper world, and at their pleasure they

Whose hearts were strong might pass from Earth to Heaven

By their own act and choice! In evil day

Mishap had fatally cut off that way, And none may now the Land of Spirits

gain,
Till from its dear-loved tenement of Violence or age, infirmity and pain,

would remain.

Such grievous loss had by their own misdeed

Upon the unworthy race of men been brought.

An aged woman once who could not speed

In fishing, earnestly one day besought Her countrymen, that they of what they caught 311

A portion would upon her wants bestow.

They set her hunger and her age at nought,

And still to her entreaties answered

And still to her entreaties answered no!

And mock'd her, till they made her heart with rage o'erflow.

36

But that Old Woman by such wanton wrong

Inflamed, went hurrying down; and in the pride

Of magic power, wherein the crone was strong,

Her human form infirm she laid aside. Better the Capiguara's limbs supplied A strength accordant to her fierce intent:

These she assumed, and, burrowing deep and wide

Beneath the Tree, with vicious will, she went,

To inflict upon mankind a lasting punishment.

37

Downward she wrought her way, and all around [mined Labouring, the solid earth she under-housen'd all the roots; then from the ground

Emerging, in her hatred of her kind, Resumed her proper form, and breathed a wind

Which gather'd like a tempest round its head: 330

Eftsoon the lofty Tree its top inclined Uptorn with horrible convulsion dread,

And over half the world its mighty wreck lay spread.

38

But never scion sprouted from that Tree.

Nor seed sprang up; and thus the easy way,

Which had till then for young and old been free, [aye.

Was closed upon the sons of men for The mighty ruin moulder'd where it lay

Till not a trace was left; and now in sooth

Almost had all remembrance pass'd away. 340

This from the Elders she had heard in youth;

Some said it was a tale, and some a very truth.

30

Nathless departed spirits at their will Could from the Land of Souls pass to and fro; [still,

They come to us in sleep when all is Sometimes to warn against the impending blow,

Alas! more oft to visit us in woe:

Though in their presence there was poor relief!

And this had sad experience made her know,

For when Quiara came, his stay was brief, 350 And, waking then, she felt a freshen'd sense of grief.

40

Yet to behold his face again, and hear His voice, though painful, was a deep delight:

It was a joy to think that he was near, To see him in the visions of the night, . .

To know that the departed still requite

The love which to their memory still will cling:

And, though he might not bless her waking sight

With his dear presence, twas a blessed thing

That sleep would thus sometimes his actual image bring.

360

Why comes he not to me? Yeruti

And Mooma, echoing with a sigh the thought, [eyes

Ask'd why it was that to her longing No dream the image of her father brought?

Nor Monnema to solve that question sought

In vain, content in ignorance to dwell; Perhaps it was because they knew him not:

Perhaps . . but sooth she could not answer well;

What the departed did, themselves alone could tell.

42

What one tribe held another disbelieved, 370

For all concerning this was dark, she said:

Uncertain all, and hard to be received. The dreadful race, from whom their fathers fled,

Boasted that even the Country of the Dead

Was theirs, and where their Spirits chose to go,

The ghosts of other men retired in dread

Before the face of that victorious foe; No better, then, the world above, than this below!

43

What then, alas! if this were true, was death?

Only a mournful change from ill to ill!

And some there were who said the
living breath

381

Would no er be taken from us by the will

Of the Good Father, but continue still To feed with life the mortal frame he gave,

Did not mischance or wicked witchcraft kill;...

Evils from which no care avail'd to

And whereby all were sent to fill the greedy grave.

44

In vain to counterwork the baleful charm

By spells of rival witchcraft was it sought,

Less potent was that art to help than harm.

No means of safety old experience brought:

Nor better fortune did they find who thought

From Death, as from some living foe, to fly:

For speed or subterfuge avail'd them nought,

But wheresoe'er they fled they found him nigh: [enemy. None ever could elude that unseen

45

Bootless the boast, and vain the proud

Of those who hoped, with arrogant display

Of arms and force, to scare him from their tent,

As if their threatful shouts and fierce

Of war could drive the Invisible away! Sometimes, regardless of the sufferer's groan,

They dragg'd the dying out, and as prey

Exposed him, that content with him alone

Death might depart, and thus his fate avert their own.

46

Depart he might, . . but only to return In quest of other victims, soon or late; When they who held this fond belief would learn,

Each by his own inevitable fate,

That in the course of man's uncertain state

Death is the one and only certain

Oh folly then to fly or deprecate

That which at last Time, ever on the wing,

Certain as day and night, to weary age must bring!

While thus the Matron spake, the youthful twain

Listen'd in deep attention, wistfully; Whether with more of wonder or of pain [eye

Uneath it were to tell. With steady Intent they heard; and, when she paused, a sigh

Their sorrowful foreboding seem'd to speak:

Questions to which she could not give

reply
Yeruti ask'd; and for that Maiden
meek... [cheek.

Involuntary tears ran down her quiet

48

A different sentiment within them stirr'd, [day, When Monnema recall'd to mind one

Imperfectly, what she had sometimes heard

In childhood, long ago, the Elders say: Almost from memory had it pass'd away, . .

How there appear'd amid the woodlands men

Whom the Great Spirit sent there to convey 430

His gracious will; but little heed she then

Had given, and like a dream it now recurr'd again.

49

But these young questioners from time to time

Call'd up the long-forgotten theme anew.

Strange men they were, from some remotest clime,

She said, of different speech, uncouth to view,

Having hair upon their face, and white in hue;

Across the World of waters wide they

Devotedly the Father's work to do, And seek the Red-Men out, and in his name

His merciful laws, and love, and promises proclaim.

50

They served a Maid more beautiful than tongue

Could tell, or heart conceive. Of human race,

All heavenly as that Virgin was, she sprung:

But for her beauty and celestial grace, Being one in whose pure elements no trace

Hade'er inhered of sin or mortal stain, The highest Heaven was now her dwelling-place;

There as a Queen divine she held her reign,

And there in endless joy for ever would remain. 450

51

Her feet upon the crescent Moon were set,

And, moving in their order round her head,

The Stars compose her sparkling coronet.

There at her breast the Virgin Mother fed

A Babe divine, who was to judge the

dead, Such power the Spirit gave this aweful

Child; Severe he was, and in his anger dread, Yet alway at his Mother's will grew

mild, So well did he obey that Majden undefiled.

52

Sometimes she had descended from above 460
To visit her true votaries, and requite

To visit her true votaries, and requite Such as had served her well. And for her love,

These bearded men, forsaking all delight,

With labour long and dangers infinite, Across the great blue waters came, and sought

The Red-Men here, to win them, if they might, [aught,

From bloody ways, rejoiced to profit Even when with their own lives the benefit was bought.

For, trusting in this heavenly Maiden's grace.

It was for them a joyful thing to die, As men who went to have their happy

With her, and with that Holy Child, on high,

In fields of bliss above the starry sky, In glory at the Virgin Mother's feet: And all who kept their lessons faithfully

An everlasting guerdon there would meet,

When Death had led their souls to that celestial seat.

54

On earth they offer'd, too, an easy life To those who their mild lessons would obey,

Exempt from want, from danger, and from strife; 480

And from the forest leading them away,

They placed them underneath this Virgin's sway,

A numerous fellowship, in peace to dwell;
Their high and happy office there to

Their high and happy office there to pay

Devotions due, which she requited well,

Their heavenly Guardian she in whatsoe'er befell.

55

Thus, Monnema remember'd, it was told

By one who in his hot and headstrong youth

Had left her happy service; but when old

Lamented oft with unavailing ruth, And thoughts which sharper than a serpent's tooth 491

Pierced him, that he had changed that peaceful place

For the fierce freedom and the ways uncouth [grace, Of their wild life, and lost that Lady's

Of their wild life, and lost that Lady's Wherefore he had no hope to see in Heaven her face.

56

And she remember'd, too, when first they fled

For safety to the farthest solitude Before their cruel foes, and lived in

That thither too their steps might be pursued

By those old enemies athirst for blood; 500

How some among them hoped to see the day

When these beloved messengers of good

To that lone hiding-place might find the way,

And them to their abode of blessedness convey.

57

Such tales excited in Yeruti's heart
A stirring hope that haply he might
meet

Some minister of Heaven; and many a part

Untrod before of that wild wood retreat

Did he with indefatigable feet

Explore; yet ever from the fruitless quest 510

Return'd at evening to his native seat By daily disappointment undeprest... So buoyant was the hope that fill'd his youthful breast.

58

At length the hour approach'd that should fulfil

His harmless heart's desire, when they shall see

Their fellow-kind, and take for good or ill

The fearful chance, for such it needs must be.

Of change from that entire simplicity. Yet wherefore should the thought of change appal?

Grief it perhaps might bring, and injury, 520

And death; . . but evil never can befall

The virtuous, for the Eye of Heaven is over all.

CANTO III

AMID those marshy woodlands far and

Which spread beyond the soaring vulture's eve.

There grew on Empalado's southern supply Groves of that tree whose leaves adust The Spaniards with their daily luxury; A beverage whose salubrious use obtains

Through many a land of mines and plains. slavery,

Even over all La Plata's sea-like And Chili's mountain realm, and proud Peru's domains.

But better for the injured Indian race Had woods of manchineel the land o'erspread: Yea, in that tree so blest by Nature's

A direr curse had they inherited,

Than if the Upas there had rear'd its And sent its baleful scions all around.

Blasting where'er its effluent force was shed, [ground,

In air and water, and the infected All things wherein the breath or sap of life is found.

The poor Guaranies dreamt of no such

When for themselves in miserable

The virtues of that leaf, with pure good will,

They taught their unsuspected visitor, New in the land as yet. They learnt his power

Too soon, which law nor conscience could restrain,

A fearless but inhuman conqueror. Heart-harden'd by the accursed lust

of gain. O fatal thirst of gold! O foul reproach | Or where the Zippa's power or Zaque's for Spain!

For gold and silver had the Spaniards sought,

Exploring Paraguay with desperate pains,

Their way through forests axe in hand they wrought:

Drench'd from above by unremitting rains

They waded over inundated plains, Forward by hope of plunder still

allured: So they might one day count their golden gains,

They cared not at what cost of sin procured,

All dangers they defied, all sufferings they endured.

Barren alike of glory and of gold

That region proved to them; nor would the soil

Unto their unindustrious hands unfold

Harvests, the fruit of peace, . . and wine and oil,

The treasures that repay contented toil With health and weal; treasures that with them bring

No guilt for priest and penance to assoil,

with their venom arm the Nor awaken'd sting

Of conscience at that hour when life is vanishing.

But keen of eye in their pursuit of gain The conquerors look'd for lucre in this

An annual harvest there might they Without the cost of annual industry. 'Twas but to gather in what there grew free

share Potosi's wealth. thence alone.

But gold in glad exchange they soon should see

From all that once the Incas called their own,

laws were known.

For this, in fact, though not in name a slave.

The Indian from his family was torn; And droves on droves were sent to find a grave

In woods and swamps, by toil severe outworn.

No friend at hand to succour or to

In death unpitied, as in life unblest. 60 O miserable race, to slavery born! Yet, when we look beyond this

world's unrest.

More miserable then the oppressors than the opprest.

Often had Kings essay'd to check the [meant;

By edicts not so well enforced as A present power was wanting to fulfil Remote authority's sincere intent.

To Avarice, on its present purpose bent,

The voice of distant Justice spake in vain:

False magistrates and priests their influence lent

The accursed thing for lucre to main-

O fatal thirst of gold! O foul reproach for Spain!

O foul reproach! but not for Spain alone.

But for all lands that bear the Christian name!

Where'er commercial slavery is known.

O shall not Justice trumpet-tongued proclaim

The foul reproach, the black offence the same ?

Hear, guilty France! and thou. O England, hear!

Thou who hast half redeem'd thyself from shame.

When slavery from thy realms shall disappear,

Then from this guilt, and not till then, And gave that weary land the blessings wilt thou be clear.

10

Uncheck'd in Paraguay it ran its

Till all the gentler children of the land Well nigh had been consumed without remorse.

The bolder tribes meantime, whose skilful hand

Had tamed the horse, in many a warlike band

Kept the field well with bow and dreadful spear.

And now the Spaniards dared no more withstand

Their force, but in their towns grew pale with fear

If the Mocobio, or the Abipon drew near.

Bear witness, Chaco, thou, from thy domain

With Spanish blood, as erst with Indian, fed!

And Corrientes, by whose church the slain

Were piled in heaps, till for the gather'd dead

One common grave was dug, one service said!

Thou too, Parana, thy sad witness bear From shores with many a mournful vestige spread,

And monumental crosses here and there.

And monumental names that tell where dwellings were!

Nor would with all their power the Kings of Spain, 100

Austrian or Bourbon, have at last avail'd

This torrent of destruction to restrain, And save a people every where assail'd By men before whose face their courage quail'd,

But for the virtuous agency of those Who with the Cross alone, when arms had fail'd.

Achieved a peaceful triumph o'er the foes.

of repose.

For whensoe'er the Spaniards felt or fear'd

An Indian enemy, they call'd for aid Upon Loyola's sons, now long endear'd

To many a happy tribe, by them convey'd

From the open wilderness or woodland shade,

In towns of happiest polity to dwell. Freely these faithful ministers essay'd The arduous enterprize, contented well [fell.

If with success they sped, or if as martyrs

14

And now it chanced some traders who had fell'd

The trees of precious foliage far and wide

On Empalado's shore, when they beheld 120

The inviting woodlands on its northern side,

Crost thither in their quest, and there espied

Yeruti's footsteps: searching then the shade

At length a lonely dwelling they descried.

And at the thought of hostile hordes dismay'd

To the nearest mission sped and ask'd the Jesuit's aid.

15

That was a call which ne'er was made in vain

Upon Loyola's sons. In Paraguay Much of injustice had they to complain,

Much of neglect; but faithful labourers they 130
In the Lord's vineyard, there was no

delay
When summon'd to his work. A

little band Of converts made them ready for the

way; [hand To Their spiritual father took a Cross in To be his staff, and forth they went to search the land.

16

He was a man of rarest qualities,

Who to this barbarous region had confined

A spirit with the learned and the

Worthy to take its place, and from mankind

Receive their homage, to the immortal mind 140

Paid in its just inheritance of fame.

But he to humbler thoughts his heart inclined;

From Gratz amid the Styrian hills he came,

And Dobrizhoffer was the good man's honour'd name.

17

It was his evil fortune to behold The labours of his painful life

destroy'd;

His flock which he had brought within the fold

Dispersed; the work of ages render'd void,

And all of good that Paraguay enjoy'd

By blind and suicidal Power o'erthrown. 150 So he the years of his old age em-

So he the years of his old age employ'd,

A faithful chronicler, in handing down Names which he loved, and things well worthy to be known.

18

And thus, when exiled from the dearloved scene,

In proud Vienna he beguiled the pain Of sad remembrance; and the Empress Queen,

That great Teresa, she did not disdain In gracious mood sometimes to entertain

Discourse with him both pleasurable and sage;

And sure a willing ear she well might deign 160 To one whose tales may equally en-

The wondering mind of youth, the thoughtful heart of age.

But of his native speech because well

Disuse in him forgetfulness had wrought,

In Latin he composed his history; A garrulous, but a lively tale, and

fraught With matter of delight and food for thought.

And, if he could in Merlin's glass have

By whom his tomes to speak our

tongue were taught,

The old man would have felt as pleased, I ween, As when he won the car of that great Empress Queen.

Little he deem'd, when with his Indian band

He through the wilds set forth upon his way,

A Poet then unborn, and in a land Which had proscribed his order, should one day

Take up from thence his moralizing

And shape a song that, with no fiction drest.

Should to his worth its grateful tribute pay,

And, sinking deep in many an English

Foster that faith divine that keeps the 180 heart at rest.

Behold him on his way! the breviary Which from his girdle hangs, his only

That well-known habit is his panoply, That Cross, the only weapon he will wield:

By day he bears it for his staff atield, By night it is the pillar of his bed;

No other lodging these wild woods can vield

Than earth's hard lap, and rustling overhead

A canopy of deep and tangled boughs far spread.

22

Yet may they not without some cautious care

Take up their inn content upon the ground.

First it behaves to clear a circle there. And trample down the grass and plantage round.

Where many a deadly reptile might be found.

Whom with its bright and comfortable The flame would else allure: such plagues abound

In these thick woods, and therefore must they beat

The earth, and trample well the herbs beneath their feet.

And now they heap dry reeds and broken wood;

The spark is struck, the crackling faggots blaze,

And cheer that unaccustom'd solitude. Soon have they made their frugal meal of maize:

In grateful adoration then they raise The evening hymn. How solemn in the wild

That sweet accordant strain wherewith they praise

The Queen of Angels, merciful and mild:

Hail, holiest Mary! Maid, and Mother undefiled.

Blame as thou may'st the Papist's erring creed,

But not their salutary rite of even! The prayers that from a pious soul proceed,

Though misdirected, reach the ear of Heaven.

Us, unto whom a purer faith is given, As our best birthright it behoves to

The precious charge; but, oh, beware the leaven

Which makes the heart of charity grow cold!

We own one Shepherd, we shall be at last one fold.

25 Thinkest thou the little company who

Pour forth their hymn devout at close of day,

Feel it no aid that those who hold

them dear At the same hour the self-same homage

Commending them to Heaven when far away ?

That the sweet bells are heard in solemn chime

Through all the happy towns of Paraguay,

Where now their brethren in one point of time

Join in the general prayer, with sympathy sublime?

That to the glorious Mother of their Lord

Whole Christendom that hour its homage pays?

From court and cottage that with one

Ascends the universal strain of praise? Amid the crowded city's restless ways, One reverential thought pervades the throng;

The traveller on his lonely road obeys The sacred hour, and, as he fares along, In spirit hears and joins his household's even-song.

27

What if they think that every prayer enroll'd

Shall one day in their good account appear :

That guardian Angels hover round [hear; and fold

Their wings in adoration while they Ministrant Spirits through the ethereal sphere

Waft it with joy, and to the grateful theme,

Well pleased, the Mighty Mother bends her ear?

A vain delusion this we rightly deem: dream.

That prayer perform'd, around the fire reclined

Beneath the leafy canopy they lay Their limbs: the Indians soon to sleep resign'd ;

And the good Father with that toilsome dav

Fatigued, full fain to sleep, . . if sleep he may,

Whom all tormenting insects there assail:

More to be dreaded these than beasts of prev Against whom strength may cope, or skill prevail,

But art of man against these enemies must fail.

Patience itself that should the sovereign cure,

For ills that touch ourselves alone, supply,

Lends little aid to one who must endure

This plague: the small tormentors fill the sky,

And swarm about their prey; there he must lie

And suffer while the hours of darkness

At times he utters with a deep-drawn Some name adored, in accents of despair

Breath'd sorrowfully forth, half murmur and half prayer.

Welcome to him the earliest gleam of

Welcome to him the earliest sound of day;

That from the sufferings of that weary night

Released, he may resume his willing Well pleased again the perils to essay Of that drear wilderness, with hope renew'd:

Success will all his labours overpay, A quest like his is cheerfully pursued, Yet what they feel is not a mere illusive | The heart is happy still that is intent on good.

And now where Empalado's waters

Through low and level shores of woodland wide,

They come; prepared to cross the sluggish deep,

An ill-shaped coracle of hardest hide, Ruder than ever Cambrian fisher plied Where Towey and the salt-sea waters meet.

The Indians launch; they steady it and guide,

Winning their way with arms and practised feet.

While in the tottering boat the Father keeps his scat.

For three long summer days on every side

They search in vain the sylvan solitude:

The fourth a human footstep is espied, And through the mazes of the pathless wood

With hound-like skill and hawk-like eve pursued: [thev

For keen upon their pious quest are As e'er were hunters on the track of blood.

Where softer ground or trodden herbs The slightest mark of man, they there explore the way.

33

More cautious, when more certain of the trace.

In silence they proceed; not like a crew Of jovial hunters, who the joyous chase With hound and horn in open field

pursue, Cheering their way with jubilant halloo.

And hurrying forward to their spoil desired,

The panting game before them, full in view:

Humaner thoughts this little band inspired.

Yet with a hope as high their gentle With that far-piercing power of melody hearts were fired.

34

Nor is their virtuous hope devoid of

The perils of that enterprise they know:

Some savage horde may have its fastness here,

A race to whom a stranger is a foe, Who not for friendly words, nor proffer'd show

Of gifts, will peace or parley entertain. If by such hands their blameless blood should flow

To serve the Lamb who for their sins was slain.

Blessed indeed their lot, for so to die is gain!

Them, thus pursuing where the track may lead.

A human voice arrests upon their way;

They stop, and thither, whence the sounds proceed,

All eyes are turn'd in wonder, ... not dismay, For sure such sounds might charm

all fear away : No nightingale whose brooding mate

is nigh, From some sequester'd bower at close

of day,

No lark rejoicing in the orient sky, Ever pour'd forth so wild a strain of melody.

The voice which through the ringing forest floats

Is one which, having ne'er been taught the skill

Of marshalling sweet words to sweeter notes,

Utters all unpremeditate, at will,

A modulated sequence loud and shrill Of inarticulate and long-breathed sound,

Varying its tones with rise and fall and trill.

Till all the solitary woods around resound.

In mute astonishment attent to hear, As if by some enchantment held, they stood.

With bending head, fix'd eye, and eager ear.

And hand upraised in warning atti-

To check all speech or step that might intrude

On that sweet strain. Them leaving thus spell-bound.

A little way alone into the wood The Father gently moved toward the sound.

Treading with quiet feet upon the grassy ground.

Anon advancing thus the trees between.

He saw beside her bower the songstress wild.

Not distant far, himself the while un-

Mooma it was, that happy maiden mild.

Who in the sunshine, like a careless

Of nature, in her joy was caroling. A heavier heart than his it had be-

guiled

So to have heard so fair a creature sing

The strains which she had learnt from all sweet birds of spring.

For these had been her teachers, these alone:

And she in many an emulous essay, At length into a descant of her own Had blended all their notes, a wild display

Of sounds in rich irregular array;

And now, as blithe as bird in vernal bower.

Pour'd in full flow the unexpressive

Rejoicing in her consciousness of power,

more.

40

In joy had she begun the ambitious

With rapid interchange of sink and swell:

And sometimes high the note was raised, and long

Produced, with shake and effort sensible,

As if the voice exulted there to dwell; But when she could no more that pitch sustain.

So thrillingly attuned the cadence fell, That with the music of its dying strain

She moved herself to tears of pleasurable pain.

It might be deem'd some dim presage possess'd

The virgin's soul; that some mysterious sense

Of change to come, upon her mind impress'd.

Had then call'd forth, ere she departed thence.

A requiem to their days of innocence. For what thou losest in thy native

There is one change alone that may compense.

O Mooma, innocent and simple maid, Only one change, and it will not be long delay'd!

When now the Father issued from the wood

Into that little glade in open sight, Like one entranced, beholding him, she stood:

Yet had she more of wonder than affright.

Yet less of wonder than of dread delight.

When thus the actual vision came in view;

For instantly the maiden read aright Wherefore he came; his garb and beard she knew:

But in the inborn sense of harmony yet | All that her mother heard had then indeed been true.

Nor was the Father filled with less surprise;

He too strange fancies well might entertain, 380

When this so fair a creature met his eyes.

He might have thought her not of mortal strain;

Rather, as bards of yore were wont to feign,

A nymph divine of Mondai's secret stream;

Or haply of Diana's woodland train: For in her beauty Mooma such might seem,

Being less a child of earth than like a poet's dream.

44

No art of barbarous ornament had scarr'd

And stain'd her virgin limbs, or 'filed her face;

Nor ever yet had evil passion marr'd In her sweet countenance the natural grace

Of innocence and youth; nor was there trace

Of sorrow, or of hardening want and care.

Strange was it in this wild and savage place,

Which seem'd to be for beasts a fitting lair, [fair.

Thus to behold a maid so gentle and so

45

Across her shoulders was a hammock flung.

By night it was the maiden's bed, by day [hung,

Her only garment. Round her as it In short unequal folds of loose array, The open meshes, when she moves, display

Her form. She stood with fix'd and wondering eyes,

And, trembling like a leaf upon the spray,

Even for excess of joy, with eager cries She call'd her mother forth to share that glad surprise. 46

At that unwonted call with quicken'd pace

The matron hurried thither, half in fear.

How strange to Monnema a stranger's face!

How strange it was a stranger's voice to hear,

How strangely to her disaccustom'd ear 410

Came even the accents of her native tongue!

But when she saw her countrymen appear,

Tears for that unexpected blessing sprung.

And once again she felt as if her heart were young.

47

Soon was her melancholy story told, And glad consent unto that Father good

Was given, that they to join his happy fold

Would leave with him their forest solitude.

Why comes not now Yeruti from the wood?

Why tarrieth he so late this blessed day?

They long to see their joy in his

They long to see their joy in his renew'd,

And look impatiently toward his way, And think they hear his step, and chide his long delay.

48

He comes at length, a happy man, to

His only dream of hope fulfill'd at last.
The sunshine of his all-believing mind
There is no doubt or fear to overcast;
No chilling forethought checks his
bliss; the past

Leaves no regret for him, and all to

Is change and wonder and delight.
How fast

Hath busy fancy conjured up a sum Of joys unknown, whereof the expectance makes him dumb.

O happy day, the Messenger of Heaven Hath found them in their lonely dwelling-place!

O happy day, to them it would be given

To share in that Eternal Mother's grace.

And one day see in heaven her glorious

Where Angels round her mercy-throne Now shall they mingle with the human race,

Sequester'd from their fellow-kind no more:

O joy of joys supreme! O bliss for them in store!

50

Full of such hopes this night they lay them down.

But not as they were wont, this night to rest.

Their old tranquillity of heart is gone; The peace wherewith till now they have been blest

Hath taken its departure. In the breast

Fast following thoughts and busy fancies throng;

Their sleep itself is feverish, and possest [belong: With dreams that to the wakeful mind

To Mooma and the youth then first the night seem'd long.

51

Day comes, and now a first and last farewell

that fair bower within their native wood,

Their quiet nest till now. The bird may dwell

Henceforth in safety there, and rear her brood,

And beasts and reptiles undisturb'd intrude: ſgo,

Reckless of this, the simple tenants Emerging from their peaceful solitude, To mingle with the world, . . but not to know

Its crimes, nor to partake its cares, nor Wherein the demon Gods themselves feel its woe.

CANTO IV

THE bells rung blithely from St. Mary's tower,

When in St. Joachin's the news was That Dobrizhoffer from his quest that Drew nigh: the glad Guaranies young and old

Throng through the gate, rejoicing to behold [glee

His face again; and all with heartfelt Welcome the Pastor to his peaceful fold.

Where so beloved amid his flock was That this return was like a day of jubilee.

How more than strange, how marvellous a sight

To the new comers was this multitude! Something like fear was mingled with

When they the busy scene of turmoil Wonder itself the sense of joy subdued, opprest

And with its all-unwonted weight These children of the quiet solitude; And now and then a sigh that heaved

the breast Unconsciously bewray'd their feeling of unrest.

Not more prodigious than that little town

Seem'd to these comers, were the pomp and power

To us, of ancient Rome in her renown; Nor the elder Babylon, or ere that

When her high gardens, and her cloudcapt tower,

And her broad walls before the Persian fell:

Nor those dread fanes on Nile's forsaken shore

Whose ruins yet their pristine grandeur tell.

might deign to dwell.

But if, all humble as it was, that scene

Possess'd a poor and uninstructed

With awe, the thoughtful spirit, well I ween. Something to move its wonder there

might find,

Something of consolation for its kind, Some hope and earnest of a happier

When vain pursuits no more the heart shall blind.

But Faith the evils of this earth assuage,

And to all souls assure their heavenly heritage.

Yes; for in history's mournful map the eve

On Paraguay, as on a sunny spot, May rest complacent: to humanity, There, and there only, hath a peaceful

Been granted, by Ambition troubled not.

By Avarice undebased, exempt from

By perilous passions undisturb'd. And what

If Glory never rear'd her standard there.

Nor with her clarion's blast awoke the slumbering air?

Content and cheerful Piety were found

Within those humble walls. youth to age

The simple dwellers paced their even round

Of duty, not desiring to engage Upon the busy world's contentious stage.

Whose ways they wisely had been train'd to dread:

Their inoffensive lives in pupilage Perpetually, but peacefully they led. From all temptation saved, and sure of By whom the scheme of that wise order daily bread.

They on the Jesuit, who was nothing loth.

Reposed alike their conscience and their cares: [both And he, with equal faith, the trust of

Accepted and discharged. The bliss is theirs pares Of that entire dependence that pre-

Entire submission, let what may befall :

And his whole careful course of life declares

That for their good he holds them thus in thrall.

Their Father and their Friend, Priest, Ruler, all in all.

Food, raiment, shelter, safety, he provides :

No forecast, no anxieties have they; The Jesuit governs, and instructs and guides;

Their part it is to honour and obey, Like children under wise parental

All thoughts and wishes are to him confess'd ;

And, when at length in life's last weary day

In sure and certain hope they sink to rest.

By him their eyes are closed, by him their burial blest.

Deem not their lives of happiness devoid,

Though thus the years their course obscurely fill.

In rural and in household arts employ'd. [skill:

And many a pleasing task of pliant For emulation here unmix'd with ill Sufficient scope was given. had assign'd

His proper part, which yet left free the will:

So well they knew to mould the ductile mind

was combined.

It was a land of priestcraft, but the Priest

Believed himself the fables that he taught:

Corrupt their forms, and yet those forms at least

Preserved a salutary faith that wrought.

Maugre the alloy, the saving end it sought. [there,

Benevolence had gain'd such empire That even superstition had been brought

An aspect of humanity to wear,
And make the weal of man its first and
only care.

11

Nor lack'd they store of innocent delight,

Music and song and dance and proud array.

Whate'er might win the ear, or charm the sight; [play

Banners and pageantry in rich dis-Brought forth upon some Saint's high holyday,

The altar drest, the church with garlands hung, [way,

Arches and floral bowers beside the And festal tables spread for old and young,

Gladness in every heart, and mirth on every tongue.

12

Thou who despisest so debased a fate, As in the pride of wisdom thou may'st call

These meek submissive Indians' low estate.

Look round the world, and see where over all

Injurious passions hold mankind in thrall.

How barbarous Force asserts a ruthless reign, [ball,

Or Mammon, o'er his portion of the Hath learn'd a baser empire to maintain.

Mammon, the god of all who give their souls to gain.

13

Behold the fraudful arts, the covert strife.

The jarring interests that engross mankind; 110 The low pursuits, the selfish aims of

life; Studies that weary and contract the

mind,
That bring no joy, and leave no peace
behind;

And Death approaching to dissolve the spell!

The immortal soul, which hath so long been blind,

Recovers then clear sight, and sees too well

The error of its ways, when irretrievable.

14

Far happier the Guaranies' humble race, [wise, With whom, in dutiful contentment The gentle virtues had their dwelling-

place. 120 With them the dear domestic charities Sustain'd no blight from fortune; natural ties

There suffer'd no divorcement, save alone [arise;

That which in course of nature might No artificial wants and ills were known:

But there they dwelt as if the world were all their own.

15

Obedience in its laws that takes delight

Was theirs; simplicity that knows no art:

Love, friendship, grateful duty in its height;

Meekness and truth, that keep all strife apart, 130 And faith and hope which elevate the

heart

Upon its heavenly heritage intent. Poor, erring, self-tormentor that thou

art, [bent, O Man! and on thine own undoing Wherewith canst thou be blest, if not with these content?

Mild pupils in submission's perfect school,

Two thousand souls were gather'd here, and here

Beneath the Jesuit's all-embracing rule

They dwelt, obeying him with love sincere,

That never knew distrust, nor felt a fear, 140

Nor anxious thought which wears the heart away. [dear; Sacred to them their laws, their Ruler Humbler or happier none could be

than they
Who knew it for their good in all things
to obey.

17

The Patron Saint, from whom their town was named,

Was that St. Joachin, who, legends say, [claim'd Unto the Saints in Limbo first pro-The Advent. Being permitted, on the day

That Death enlarged him from this mortal clay,

His daughter's high election to behold, Thither his soul, glad herald, wing'd its way,

And to the Prophets and the Patriarchs old

The tidings of great joy and near deliverance told.

18

There on the altar was his image set, The lamp before it burning night and day.

And there was incensed, when his votaries met

Before the sacred shrine, their beads to say,

And for his fancied intercession pray, Devoutly as in faith they bent the

Such adoration they were taught to pay; 160

Good man, how little had he ween'd that he [idolatry! Should thus obtain a place in Rome's

19

But chiefly there the Mother of our Lord,

His blessed daughter, by the multitude

Was for their special patroness adored. Amid the square on high her image stood.

Clasping the Babe in her beatitude, The Babe Divine on whom she fix'd her sight:

And in their hearts, albe the work was rude.

It rais'd the thought of all-commanding might, 170 Combin'd with boundless love and

mercy infinite.

20

To this great family the Jesuit brought

His new-found children now; for young and old

He deem'd alike his children, while he wrought

For their salvation, . . seeking to unfold

The saving mysteries in the creed

enroll'd,

To their slow minds, that could but

ill conceive [told. The import of the mighty truths he But errors they have none to which

But errors they have none to which they cleave,

And whatsoe'er he tells they willingly believe. 180

21

Safe from that pride of ignorance were they

That with small knowledge thinks itself full wise.

How at believing aught should these delay,

When every where new objects met their eyes

To fill the soul with wonder and surprise?

Not of itself, but by temptation bred, In man doth impious unbelief arise; It is our instinct to believe and dread, God bids us love, and then our faith is

perfected.

Quick to believe, and slow to comprehend,

Like children, unto all the teacher taught

Submissively an easy ear they lend:
And to the font at once he might have brought

These converts, if the Father had not thought

Theirs was a case for wise and safe delay,

Lest lightly learnt might lightly be forgot:

And meanwhile due instruction day by day

Would to their opening minds the sense of truth convey.

23

Of this they reck'd not whether soon or late;

For overpowering wonderment possess.

Their faulties: and in this new estate.

Their faculties; and in this new estate Strange sights and sounds and thoughts well nigh opprest

Their sense, and raised a turmoil in the breast

Resenting less of pleasure than of pain:

And sleep afforded them no natural rest, [train,

But in their dreams, a mix'd disorder'd The busy scenes of day disturb'd their hearts again.

24

Even when the spirit to that secret wood

Return'd, slow Mondai's silent stream beside,

No longer there it found the solitude Which late it left: strange faces were descried, 211

Voices, and sounds of music far and wide,

And buildings seem'd to tower amid the trees,

And forms of men and beasts on every side,

As ever wakeful fancy hears and sees, All things that it had heard, and seen, and more than these. 25

For in their sleep strange forms deform'd they saw

Of frightful fiends, their ghostly enemies.

And souls who must abide the rigorous law

Weltering in fire, and there with dolorous cries 220

Blaspheming roll around their hopeless eyes;

And those who, doom'd a shorter term to bear

In penal flames, look upward to the skies,

Seeking and finding consolation there, And feel, like dew from heaven, the precious aid of prayer.

26

And Angels who around their glorious Queen

In adoration bent their heads abased; And infant faces in their dreams were seen

Hovering on cherub-wings; and Spirits placed

To be their guards invisible, who chased 230
With fiery arms their fiendish foes away:

Such visions overheated fancy traced, Peopling the night with a confused array

That made its hours of rest more restless than the day.

97

To all who from an old erratic course Of life, within the Jesuit's fold were led,

The change was perilous. They felt

Of habit, when, till then in forests bred, A thick perpetual umbrage overhead, They came to dwell in open light and air.

This ill the Fathers long had learnt to

And still devised such means as might prepare

The new-reclaim'd unhurt this total change to bear.

All thoughts and occupations to com-

To change their air, their water, and their food.

And those old habits suddenly uproot, Conform'd to which the vital powers pursued

Their functions, such mutation is too

For man's fine frame unshaken to sustain.

And these poor children of the soli-

Began ere long to pay the bitter

That their new way of life brought with it in its train.

29

On Monnema the apprehended ill Came first; the matron sunk beneath the weight

Of a strong malady, whose force no skill

In healing might avort, or mitigate. Yet, happy in herchildren's safe estate, Her thankfulness for them she still exprest;

And, yielding then complacently to fate.

With Christian rites her passing hour was blest. 260

And with a Christian's hope she was consign'd to rest.

30

They laid her in the Garden of the Dead:

Such as a Christian burial-place should be

Was that fair spot, where every grave was spread

With flowers, and not a weed to spring was free;

But the pure blossoms of the orange tree

Dropt like a shower of fragrance on the bier:

And palms, the type of immortality,
Planted in stately colonnades appear,
That all was verdant there throughout
the unvarying year.

31

Nor ever did irreverent feet intrude Within that sacred spot: nor sound of mirth.

Unseemly there, profane the solitude, Where solemnly committed earth to

Waiting the summons for their second birth.

Whole generations in Death's peaceful fold

Collected lay; green innocence, ripe worth,

Youth full of hope, and age whose days were told,

Compress'd alike into that mass of mortal mould.

32

Mortal, and yet at the Archangel's voice 280

To put on immortality. That call Shall one day make the sentient dust rejoice:

These bodies then shall rise and cast

Corruption, with whate'er of earthy thrall

Had clogg'd the heavenly image, then set free.

How then should Death a Christian's heart appal?

Lo, Heaven for you is open; . . enter ye Children of God, and heirs of his eternity!

33

This hope supported Mooma, hand in hand

When with Yeruti at the grave she stood. 290

Less even now of death they under-

Than of the joys eternal that ensued:

The bliss of infinite beatitude

To them had been their teacher's favourite theme.

Wherewith their hearts so fully were imbued.

That it the sole reality might seem, Life, death, and all things else, a shadow or a dream.

Yea, so possest with that best hope were they,

That, if the heavens had open'd overhead.

And the Archangel with his trump that day 300

To judgement had convoked the quick and dead,

They would have heard the summons not with dread.

But in the joy of faith that knows no fear;

Come, Lord! come quickly! would this pair have said,

And thou, O Queen of men and Angels dear.

Lift us whom thou hast loved into thy happy sphere!

25

They wept not at the grave, though overwrought

With feelings there as if the heart would break.

Some haply might have deem'd they suffer'd not;

Yet they who look'd upon that Maiden meek 310

Might see what deep emotion blanch'd her cheek.

An inward light there was which fill'd her eyes,

And told, more forcibly than words could speak,

That this disruption of her earliest ties Had shaken mind and frame in all their faculties.

36

It was not passion only that disturb'd Her gentle nature thus; it was not grief;

Nor human feeling by the effort curb'd Of some misdeeming duty, when relief Were surely te be found, albeit brief, If sorrow at its springs might freely flow;

Nor yet repining, stronger than belief In its first force, that shook the Maiden

Though these alone might that frail fabric overthrow.

37

The seeds of death were in her at that hour.

Soon was their quick'ning and their growth display'd;

Thenceforth she droop'd and wither'd like a flower.

Which, when it flourish'd in its native shade.

Some child to his own garden hath convey'd,

And planted in the sun, to pine away. Thus was the gentle Mooma seen to fade,

Not under sharp disease, but day by day

Losing the powers of life in visible decay.

38

The sunny hue that tinged her cheek was gone.

A deathy paleness settled in its stead; The light of joy which in her eyes had shone,

Now, like a lamp that is no longer fed. Grew dim; but, when she raised her heavy head

Some proffer'd help of kindness to partake,

Those feeble eyes a languid lustre shed, 340

And her sad smile of thankfulness would wake

Grief even in callous hearts for that sweet sufferer's sake.

39

How had Yeruti borne to see her fade? But he was spared the lamentable sight,

Himself upon the bed of sickness laid.

Joy of his heart, and of his eyes the light

Had Mooma been to him, his soul's delight,

On whom his mind for ever was in-

His darling thought by day, his dream by night,

The playmate of his youth in mercy

With whom his life had pass'd in peacefullest content.

Well was it for the youth, and well for her.

As there in placid helplessness she lay, He was not present with his love to stir [clay,

Emotions that might shake her feeble And rouse up in her heart a strong array

Of feelings, hurtful only when they bind [away.

To earth the soul that soon must pass But this was spared them; and no pain of mind

To trouble her had she, instinctively resign'd.

41

Nor was there wanting to the sufferers aught

Of careful kindness to alleviate

The affliction; for the universal thought

In that poor town was of their sad estate.

And what might best relieve or miti-

Their case, what help of nature or of

And many were the prayers compassionate

That the good Saints their healing would impart,

Breathed in that maid's behalf from many a tender heart.

42

And vows were made for her, if vows might save; 370 She for herself the while preferr'd no

prayer; For, when she stood beside her

Mother's grave, Her earthly hopes and thoughts had ended there.

Her only longing now was, free as air From this obstructive flesh to take her flight

For Paradise, and seek her Mother

And then regaining her beloved sight Rest in the eternal sense of undisturb'd delight. 43

Her heart was there, and there she felt and knew

That soon full surely should her spirit be. 380 And who can tell what foretastes might

ensue
To one whose soul from all earth's

To one, whose soul, from all earth's thraldom free,

Was waiting thus for immortality? Sometimes she spake with short and hurried breath [see,

As if some happy sight she seem'd to While in the fulness of a perfect faith, Even with a lover's hope, she lay and look'd for death.

4.1

I said that for herself the patient maid

Preferr'd no prayer; but oft her feeble tongue

And feebler breath a voice of praise essay'd; 390
And duly, when the vesper bell was rung. [sung

Her evening hymn in faint accord she So piously, that they who gather'd round [hung,

Awe-stricken on her heavenly accents
As though they thought it were no
mortal sound,

But that the place whereon they stood was holy ground.

45

At such an hour when Dobrizhoffer stood

Beside her bed, oh! how unlike, he thought,

This voice to that which ringing through the wood

Had led him to the secret bower he sought!

And was it then for this that he had

brought
That harmless household from their

native shade? [lot;

Death had already been the mother's And this fair Mooma, was she form'd to fade

So soon, . . so soon must she in earth's cold lap be laid?

Yet he had no misgiving at the sight; And wherefore should he? he had acted well.

And, deeming of the ways of God [befell

Knew that to such as these, whate'er Must needs for them be best. But who could dwell 410 Unmoved upon the fate of one so

So blithesome late? What marvel if tears fell.

From that good man as over her he And that the prayers he said came faltering from his tongue!

47

She saw him weep, and she could understand

The cause thus tremulously that made him speak.

By his emotion moved she took his **fcheek** A gleam of pleasure o'er her pallid

Pass'd, while she look'd at him with meaning meek,

And for a little while, as loth to part, Detaining him, her fingers lank and weak,

Play'd with their hold; then letting him depart

She gave him a slow smile that touch'd him to the heart.

48

Mourn not for her! for what hath life to give [here? That should detain her ready spirit Thinkest thou that it were worth a wish to live.

Could wishes hold her from her proper sphere?

That simple heart, that innocence sincere

The world would stain. Fitter she ne'er could be

For the great change; and now that change is near, Oh who would keep her soul from

being free? for thee!

49

She hath pass'd away, and on her lips a smile

Hath settled, fix'd in death. Judged they aright,

Or suffer'd they their fancy to beguile The reason, who believed that she had sight

Of Heaven before her spirit took its flight:

That Angels waited round her lowly

And that in that last effort of delight. When, lifting up her dying arms, she

I come! a ray from heaven upon her face was shed?

St. Joachin's had never seen a day Of such profuse and general grief before,

As when with tapers, dirge, and long

The Maiden's body to the grave they

All eyes, all hearts, her early death deplore ;

Yet, wondering at the fortune they lament,

They the wise ways of Providence adore,

By whom the Pastor surely had been

When to the Mondai woods upon his quest he went. 450

This was, indeed, a chosen family, For Heaven's especial favour mark'd, they said:

Shut out from all mankind they seem'd to be,

Yet mercifully there were visited,

That so within the fold they might be led.

Then call'd away to bliss. Already In their baptismal innocence were dead;

The third was on the bed of death, they knew,

Maiden beloved of Heaven, to die is best | And in the appointed course must presently ensue.

They marvell'd therefore, when the youth once more 460

Rose from his bed and walk'd abroad again;

Severe had been the malady, and sore The trial, while life struggled to maintain

Its seat against the sharp assaults of pain:

But life in him was vigorous; long he

Ere it could its ascendency regain,

Then, when the natural powers resumed their sway,

All trace of late disease pass'd rapidly away.

53

The first inquiry, when his mind was free,

Was for his Sister. She was gone, they said, 470

Gone to her Mother, evermore to be With her in Heaven. At this no tears he shed.

Nor was he seen to sorrow for the dead:

But took the fatal tidings in such part As if a dull unfeeling nature bred

His unconcern; for hard would seem the heart

To which a loss like his no suffering could impart.

54

How little do they see what is, who frame

Their hasty judgement upon that which seems!

Waters that babble on their way proclaim 480

A shallowness: but in their strength deep streams

Flow silently. Of death Yeruti deems

Not as an ill, but as the last great good,

Compared wherewith all other he

Transient and void: how then should thought intrude

Of sorrow in his heart for their beatitude?

55

While dwelling in their sylvan solitude Less had Yeruti learnt to entertain A sense of age than death. He under-

stood

Something of death from creatures he had slain; 490 But here the ills which follow in the

But here the ills which follow in the train

Of age had first to him been manifest, ...

The shrunken form, the limbs that move with pain,

The failing sense, infirmity, unrest, . . That in his heart he said to die betimes was best.

56

Nor had he lost the dead: they were but gone

Before him, whither he should shortly

Their robes of glory they had first put on;

He, cumber'd with mortality, below Must yet abide awhile, content to know 500

He should not wait in long expectance

What cause then for repining, or for woe?

Soon shall he join them in their heavenly sphere,

And often, even now, he knew that they were near.

57

'Twas but in open day to close his

And shut out the unprofitable view Of all this weary world's realities,

And forthwith, even as if they lived anew.

The dead were with him; features, form and hue,

And looks and gestures were restored again: 510

Their actual presence in his heart he knew;

And, when their converse was disturb'd, oh then

How flat and stale it was to mix with living men!

But not the less, whate'er was to be

With living men he took his part content.

At loom, in garden, or a-field, as one Whose spirit, wholly on obedience bent,

To every task its prompt attention lent.

Alert in labour he among the best: And when to church the congregation

None more exact than he to cross his breast.

And kneel, or rise, and do in all things like the rest.

Cheerful he was, almost like one elate With wine, before it hath disturb'd his power

Of reason. Yet he seem'd to feel the weight

Of time; for always, when from vonder tower

He heard the clock tell out the passing hour,

The sound appear'd to give him some delight:

And, when the evening shades began to lower.

Then was he seen to watch the fading As if his heart rejoiced at the return of

60

night.

The old man to whom he had been given in care said. To Dobrizhoffer came one day and The trouble which our youth was thought to bear

With such indifference hath deranged his head.

He says that he is nightly visited: His Mother and his Sister come and

That he must give this message from the dead.

Not to defer his baptism, and delay longer stay. 540 61

A dream the Jesuit deem'd it; a deceit Upon itself by feverish fancy wrought; A mere delusion which it were not

To censure, lest the youth's distemper'd thought

Might thereby be to farther error brought;

But he himself its vanity would find, ... Inot.

They argued thus, . . if it were noticed His baptism was in fitting time design'd

The Father said, and then dismiss'd it from his mind.

62

But the old Indian came again ere With the same tale, and freely then

confest wrong; His doubt that he had done Yeruti For something more than common seem'd imprest;

And now he thought that certes it were best

From the youth's lips his own account to hear.

Haply the Father then to his request Might yield, regarding his desire sincere.

Nor wait for farther time, if there were aught to fear.

Considerately the Jesuit heard, and bade

The youth be called. Yeruti told his tale. Nightly these blessed spirits came, he

said. To warn him he must come within

the pale

Of Christ without delay; nor must he fail

This warning to their Pastor to repeat, Till the renewed entreaty should pre-

Life's business then for him would be complete.

A soul upon the earth which should no And 'twas to tell him this they left their starry seat.

Came they to him in dreams?..he could not tell.

Sleeping or waking now small difference made:

For even while he slept he knew full well 570

That his dear Mother and that darling Maid

Both in the Garden of the Dead were laid: [same,

And yet he saw them as in life, the Saveonly that in radiant robes array'd, And round about their presence when they came

There shone an effluent light as of a harmless flame.

Gr.

And where he was he knew, the time, the place, . .

All circumstantial things to him were clear.

His own heart undisturb'd. His Mother's face

How could he choose but know; or, knowing, fear 580

Her presence and that Maid's, to him more dear [below? Than all that had been left him now Their love had drawn them from their

happy sphere;
That dearest love unchanged they came to show;

And he must be baptized, and then he too might go.

66

With searching ken the Jesuit while he spake

Perused him, if in countenance or tone Aught might be found appearing to partake

Of madness. Mark of passion there was none:

None of derangement: in his eye alone, 590

As from a hidden fountain emanate, Something of an unusual brightness shone:

But neither word nor look betray'd a Of wandering, and his speech, though earnest, was sedate.

67

Regular his pulse, from all disorder free.

The vital powers perform'd their part assign'd;

And to whate'er was ask'd collectedly He answer'd. Nothing troubled him in mind;

Why should it? Were not all around him kind?

Did not all love him with a love sincere, 600 And seem in serving him a joy to find?

He had no want, no pain, no grief, no fear;

But he must be baptized; he could not tarry here.

68

Thy will be done, Father in heaven who art!

The Pastor said, nor longer now denied:

But with a weight of awe upon his heart

Enter'd the church, and there, the font beside,

With holy water, chrism and salt applied,

Perform'd in all solemnity the rite.

His feeling was that hour with fear allied;

610

Yeruti's was a sense of pure delight, And while he knelt his eyes seem'd larger and more bright.

69

His wish hath been obtain'd, and this being done

His soul was to its full desire content. The day in its accustom'd course pass'd on,

The Indian mark'd him ere to rest he went,

How o'er his beads, as he was wont, he bent.

And then, like one who casts all care aside, [event,

Lay down. The old man fear'd no ill When, 'Ye are come for me!' Yeruti cried:

'Yes, I am ready now!' and instantly he died.

THE POET'S PILGRIMAGE TO WATERLOO.

ΕΥΑΝΘΈΑ Δ' ΑΝΑΒΑΣΟΜΑΙ ΣΤΟΛΟΝ ΑΜΦ' ΑΡΈΤΑ ΚΕΛΑΔΕΩΝ.—Pindar, Pyth. 2.

TO

JOHN MAY.

AFTER A FRIENDSHIP OF TWENTY YEARS,

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED,
IN TESTIMONY OF THE HIGHEST ESTEEM AND AFFECTION,

BY

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

ARGUMENT

THE first part of this Poem describes a journey to the scene of war. The second is in an allegorical form; it exposes the gross material philosophy which has been the guiding principle of the French politicians, from Mirabeau to Buonaparte; and it states the opinions of those persons who lament the restoration of the Bourbons, because the hopes which they entertained from the French Revolution have not been realized: and of those who see only evil, or blind chance, in the course of human events.

To the Christian philosopher all things are consistent and clear. Our first parents brought with them the light of natural religion and the moral law; as men departed from these, they tended towards barbarous and savage life; large portions of the world are in this degenerated state; still, upon the great scale, the human race, from the beginning, has been progressive. But the direct object of Buonaparte was to establish a military despotism wherever his power extended; and the immediate and inevitable consequence of such a system is to brutalize and degrade mankind. The contest in which this country was engaged against that Tyrant, was a struggle between good and evil principles, and never was there a victory so important to the best hopes

of human nature as that which was won by British valour at Waterloo, . its effects extending over the whole civilized world, and involving the vital interests of all mankind.

That victory leaves England in security and peace. In no age and in no country has man ever existed under circumstances so favourable to the full development of his moral and intellectual faculties, as in England at this time. The peace which she has won by the battle of Waterloo, leaves her at leisure to pursue the great objects and duties of bettering her own condition, and diffusing the blessings of civilization and Christianity.

PROEM

1

Once more I see thee, Skiddaw! once again

Behold thee in thy majesty serene, Where, like the bulwark of this favour'd plain,

Alone thou standest, monarch of the scene . .

Thou glorious Mountain, on whose ample

The sunbeams love to play, the vapours love to rest!

I come, insatiate of the accustom'd sight;

And, listening as the eternal torrent

Drink in with eye and ear a fresh delight:

For I have wander'd far by land and

In all my wanderings still remembering thee.

Twelve years, (how large a part of man's brief day!)

Nor idly, nor ingloriously spent, Of evil and of good have held their way, Since first upon thy banks I pitch'd my tent.

Hither I came in manhood's active prime,

And here my head hath felt the touch of time.

Heaven hath with goodly increase blest me here.

Where childless and opprest with grief I came;

With voice of fervent thankfulness sincere

Let me the blessings which are mine proclaim;

Here I possess, . . what more should I require ?

Books, children, leisure, . . all my heart's desire.

O joyful hour, when to our longing

The long-expected wheels at length drew nigh!

When the first sound went forth, 'They come, they come!'

And hope's impatience quicken'd every eye!

'Never had man whom Heaven would heap with bliss

than this.'

Once more, O Derwent, to thy aweful | Aloft on yonder bench, with arms dispread,

My boy stood, shouting there his father's name,

Waving his hat around his happy head; And there, a younger group, his sisters

Smiling they stood with looks of pleased surprize,

While tears of joy were seen in elder

Soon each and all came crowding round to share

The cordial greeting, the beloved sight: [there!

What welcomings of hand and lip were And, when those overflowings of delight

Subsided to a sense of quiet bliss, Life hath no purer, deeper happiness.

The young companion of our weary way Found here the end desired of all her

She, who in sickness pining many a day Hunger'd and thirsted for her native

Forgetful now of sufferings past and pain, Rejoiced to see her own dear home again.

Recover'd now, the homesick mountaineer

Sate by the playmate of her infancy, Her twin-like comrade, . . render'd doubly dear

For that long absence: full of life was she.

With voluble discourse and eager mien Telling of all the wonders she had seen.

10

Here silently between her parents stood My dark-eyed Bertha, timid as a dove; And gently oft from time to time she woo'd

Pressure of hand, or word, or look of More glad return, more happy hour With impulse shy of bashful tenderness, 30 | Soliciting again the wish'd caress.

The younger twain in wonder lost were

My gentle Kate, and my sweet Isabel: Long of our promised coming, day by day. It had been their delight to hear and

And now, when that long-promised hour was come,

Surprize and wakening memory held them dumb.

For in the infant mind, as in the old, When to its second childhood life declines,

A dim and troubled power doth Memory hold:

But soon the light of young Remembrance shines

Renew'd, and influences of dormant love Waken'd within, with quickening influence move.

O happy season theirs, when absence brings [pain, Small feeling of privation, none of Yet at the present object love re-springs, As night-closed flowers at morn expand again!

Nor deem our second infancy unblest, When gradually composed we sink to rest. 78

Soon they grew blithe as they were wont to be: seek: Her old endearments each began to And Isabel drew near to climb my knee, And pat with fondling hand her father's cheek; fthus

With voice and touch and look reviving The feelings which had slept in long disuse.

But there stood one whose heart could entertain

And comprehend the fulness of the joy; The father, teacher, playmate, was again Come to his only and his studious boy: And he beheld again that mother's eye, Which with such ceaseless care had Shine forth with heavenly radiance at watch'd his infancy.

16

Bring forth the treasures now, ... a proud display, . . [return! For rich as Eastern merchants we Behold the black Beguine, the Sister grey, The Friars whose heads with sober

motion turn, The Ark well-fill'd with all its numerous Noah and Shem and Ham and Japhet,

and their wives.

The tumbler, loose of limb: the wrestlers twain: And many a toy beside of quaint Which, when his fleecy troops no more can gain

Their pasture on the mountains hoar with ice. The German shepherd carves with curious knife.

Earning in easy toil the food of frugal

18

It was a group which Richter, had he view'd. [fect skill:

Might have deem'd worthy of his per-The keen impatience of the younger brood. [still;

Their eager eyes and fingers never The hope, the wonder, and the restless

Of those glad girls, and that vociferous

The aged friend screne with quiet smile, Who in their pleasure finds her own delight;

The mother's heart-felt happiness the [sight: while: The aunts, rejoicing in the joyful And he who, in his gaiety of heart,

With glib and noisy tongue perform'd the showman's part.

Scoff ye who will! but let me, gracious Heaven, Preserve this boyish heart till life's last

For so that inward light by Nature given Shall still direct, and cheer me on my [descend,

And, brightening as the shades of age the end. 120

This was the morning light vouchsafed, which led

My favour'd footsteps to the Muses' hill,

Whose arduous paths I have not ceased to tread,

From good to better persevering still; And, if but self-approved, to praise or blame

Indifferent, while I toil for lasting fame.

22

And O ye nymphs of Castaly divine!

Whom I have dutifully served so long,

Benignant to your votary now incline, That I may win your ear with gentle song,

Such as, I ween, is ne'er disown'd by you, . .

A low prelusive strain, to nature true.

23

But when I reach at themes of loftier thought,

And tell of things surpassing earthly sense.

(Which by yourselves, O Muses, I am taught.)

Then aid me with yourfuller influence, And to the height of that great argument

Support my spirit in her strong ascent!

24

So may I boldly round my temples bind The laurel which my master Spenser wore;

And, free in spirit as the mountain wind That makes my symphony in this lone hour.

No perishable song of triumph raise, But sing in worthy strains my Country's praise.

THE POET'S PILGRIMAGE

PART I THE JOURNEY

ΤΩΝ ΠΟΛΥΚΤΟΝΩΝ ΓΑΡ ΟΥΚ ΑΣΚΟΠΟΙ ΘΕΟΙ.

ÆSCHYLUS.

I. FLANDERS

1

Our world hath seen the work of war's debate

Consummated in one momentous day

Twice in the course of time; and twice the fate

Of unborn ages hung upon the

First at Platæa, in that aweful hour When Greece united smote the Persian's power. 9

For, had the Persian triumph'd, then the spring

Of knowledge from that living source had ceast;

All would have fallen before the barbarous King,

Art, Science, Freedom; the despotic East, 10 Setting her mark upon the race subdued,

Had stamp'd them in the mould of sensual servitude.

:

The second day was that when Martel broke [opprest,

The Musselmen, delivering France And, in one mighty conflict, from the yoke Of misbelieving Mecca saved the West;

Else had the Impostor's law destroy'd the ties

Of public weal and private charities.

Such was the danger, when that Man of Blood

Burst from the iron Isle, and brought again, 20

Like Satan rising from the sulphurous flood,

His impious legions to the battle plain: [field Such too was our deliverance, when the Of Waterloo beheld his fortunes yield.

5

I, who with faith unshaken from the first, Even when the Tyrant seem'd to touch the skies,

Had look'd to see the high-blown bubble burst.

And for a fall conspicuous as his rise, Even in that faith had look'd not for defeat 29

So swift, so overwhelming, so complete.

6

Me most of all men it behoved to raise The strain of triumph for this foe subdued,

To give a voice to joy, and in my lays
Exalt a nation's hymn of gratitude,
And blazon forth in song that day's
renown...

For I was graced with England's laurel crown.

7

And, as I once had journey'd to behold
Far off, Ourique's consecrated field,
Where Portugal the faithful and the bold
Assumed the symbols of her sacred
shield,

40

More reason now that I should bend my way

The field of British glory to survey.

8

So forth I set upon this pilgrimage,
And took the partner of my life with
me,
[age

And one dear girl, just ripe enough of Retentively to see what I should see; That thus, with mutual recollections fraught.

We might bring home a store for after-

thought,

Q

We left our pleasant Land of Lakes, and went

Throughout whole England's length,
a weary way,
50

Even to the farthest shores of eastern Kent:

Embarking there upon an autumn day,

Toward Ostend we held our course all night,

And anchor'd by its quay at morning's earliest light.

10

Small vestige there of that old siege appears,

And little of remembrance would be found,

When for the space of three long painful years

The persevering Spaniard girt it round,

And gallant youths of many a realm from far

Went students to that busy school of war. 60

11

Yet still those wars of obstinate defence Their lessons offer to the soldier's hand:

Large knowledge may the statesman draw from thence:

And still from underneath the drifted sand,

Sometimes the storm, or passing foot lays bare

Part of the harvest Death has gather'd there.

12

Peace be within thy walls, thou famous town.

For thy brave bearing in those times of old;

May plenty thy industrious children crown,

And prosperous merchants day by day behold 70 Many a rich vessel from the injurious

nter the become of the quiet quer

Enter the bosom of thy quiet quay.

Embarking there, we glided on between Strait banks raised high above the level land,

With many a cheerful dwelling white and green [hand.

In goodly neighbourhood on either Huge-timber'd bridges o'er the passage lay, [way. Which wheel'd aside and gave us easy

14

Four horses, aided by the favouring breeze,

Drew our gay vessel, slow and sleek and large; 80

Crack goes the whip, the steersman at his ease [barge.

Directs the way, and steady went the

Ere evening closed to Bruges thus we came, . .

Fair city, worthy of her ancient fame.

15

The season of her splendour is gone by,
Yet every where its monuments
remain; [on high,
Temples which rear their stately heads
Canals that intersect the fertile plain,
Wide streets and squares, with many
a court and hall
Spacious and undefaced, but ancient all.

16

Time hath not wrong'd her, nor hath
Ruin sought 9r
Rudely her splendid structures to
destroy, [fraught,
Save in those recent days with evil
When Mutability, in drunken joy
Triumphant, and from all restraint
released, [beast.
Let loose the fierce and many-headed

17

But for the scars in that unhappy rage
Inflicted, firm she stands and undecay'd;
Like our first sires', a beautiful old age
Is hers, in venerable years array'd;
And yet to her benignant stars may
bring,

What fate denies to man, . . a second
spring.

18

When I may read of tilts in days of old, And tourneys graced by chieftains of renown, [bold. Fair dames, grave citizens, and warriors

Fair dames, grave citizens, and warriors
If Fancy would pourtray some stately
town, [be,
Which for each norm fit these to should

Which for such pomp fit theatre should Fair Bruges, I shall then remember thee.

- 19

Nor did thy landscape yield me less delight,

Seen from the deck as slow it glided by, 110 Or when beneath us, from thy Belfroy's

height, [sky; Its boundless circle met the bending The waters smooth and straight, thy

proper boast,
And lines of road-side trees in long
perspective lost.

20 No happier landscape may on earth be

seen, [groves,
Rich gardens all around and fruitful
White dwellings trim relieved with
lively green, [loves,
The pollard that the Flemish painter
With aspins tall and poplars fair to view,

Casting o'er all the land a grey and willowy hue. 120

21

My lot hath lain in scenes sublime and rude,

Where still devoutly I have served and sought [tude. The Power divine which dwells in soli-

The Power divine which dwells in soli-In boyhood was I wont, with rapture fraught, Amid those rocks and woods to wander

Amid those rocks and woods to wander Where Avon hastens to the Severn sea.

22

In Cintra also have I dwelt erewhile,
That earthly Eden, and have seen at
eve [tain pile,
The sea-mists, gathering round its mounWhelm with their billows all below,
but leave 130

One pinnacle sole seen, whereon it stood Like the Ark on Ararat, above the flood.

And now am I a Cumbrian mountaineer;

Their wintry garment of unsullied snow

The mountains have put on, the heavens are clear,

And you dark lake spreads silently below:

Who sees them only in their summer hour

Sees but their beauties half, and knows not half their power.

24

Yet hath the Flemish scene a charm for me

That soothes and wins upon the willing heart; 140
Though all is level as the sleeping

sea,
A natural beauty springs from perfect

art,
And something more than pleasure fills

the breast

To see how well-directed toil is blest.

25

Two nights have pass'd; the morning opens well,

Fair are the aspects of the favouring sky;

Soon you sweet chimes the appointed hour will tell.

For here to music Time moves merrily: Aboard! aboard! no more must we delay, . .

Farewell, good people of the Fleur de Bled!

26

Beside the busy wharf the Trekschuit rides,

With painted plumes and tent-like awning gay;

Carts, barrows, coaches, hurry from all sides,

And passengers and porters throng the way,

Contending all at once in clamorous speech,

French, Flemish, English, each confusing each.

27

A beauteous pensioner, who daily found The bounty of such casual company; Nor left us till the bell said all was done, And slowly we our watery way begun.

25

Europe can boast no richer, goodlier scene,

Than that through which our pleasant passage lay, [green, By fertile fields and fruitful gardens The journey of a short autumnal day; Sleek well-fed steeds our steady vessel drew,

The heavens were fair, and Mirth was of our crew.

29

Along the smooth canal's unbending line, Beguiling time with light discourse, we went.

Nor wanting savoury food nor generous wine.

Ashore too there was feast and merriment;

The jovial peasants at some village fair Were dancing, drinking, smoking, gambling there.

30

Of these, or of the ancient towers of Ghent [tell;

Renown'd, I must not tarry now to Of picture, or of church, or monument; Nor how we mounted to that pon-

derous bell, The Belfroy's boast, which bears old

Roland's name,
Nor yields to Oxford Tom, or Tom of
Lincoln's fame.
180

31

Nor of that sisterhood, whom to their rule Of holy life no hasty vows restrain, Who, meek disciples of the Christian school.

Watch by the bed of sickness and of pain: [impart Oh what a strength divine doth Faith To inborn goodness in the female heart!

A gentle party from the shores of Kent Thus far had been our comrades, as befell:

Fortune had link'd us first, and now Consent, . .

For why should Choice divide whom Chance so well

Had join'd, and they to view the famous ground,

Like us, were to the Field of Battle bound.

33

Farther as yet they look'd not than that quest, . .

The land was all before them where to choose.

So we consorted here as seemed best; Who would such pleasant fellowship refuse

Of ladies fair and gentle comrades free ? . .

Certes we were a joyous company.

Yet lack'd we not discourse for graver

Such as might suit sage auditors, I

For some among us in far distant climes The cities and the ways of men had [well No unobservant travellers they, but

Of what they there had learnt they knew to tell.

35

The one of frozen Moscovy could speak, And well his willing listeners entertain With tales of that inclement region bleak. [reign,

The pageantry and pomp of Catherine's And that proud city, which with wise intent

The mighty founder raised, his own great monument.

And one had dwelt with Malabars and [dispense

Where fertile earth and genial heaven Profuse their bounty upon Indian shores; the sense,

The valleys with perpetual fruitage blest. The mountains with unfading foliage

drest.

He those barbaric palaces had seen. The work of Eastern potentates of old: And in the Temples of the Rock had

Awe-struck their dread recesses to behold:

A gifted hand was his, which by its skill Could to the eye pourtray such wondrous scenes at will.

A third, who from the Land of Lakes with me

Went out upon this pleasant pilgrim-

Had sojourn'd long beyond the Atlantic

Adventurous was his spirit as his age, For he in far Brazil, through wood and waste,

Had travell'd many a day, and there his heart was placed.

39

Wild region, . . happy if at night he found

The shelter of some rude Tapuya's shed:

Else would he take his lodgement on the ground,

Or from the tree suspend his hardy bed;

And sometimes, starting at the jaguar's cries.

See through the murky night the prowler's fiery eyes.

40

And sometimes over thirsty deserts

And sometimes over flooded plains he went: . .

A joy it was his fire-side tales to hear, And he a comrade to my heart's content:

For he of what I most desired could tell, Whate'er delights the eye, or charms And loved the Portugals because he knew them well. 240

Here to the easy barge we bade adieu; Land-travellers now along the wellpaved way,

Where road-side trees, still lengthening on the view,

Before us and behind unvarying lay: Through lands well-labour'd to Alost we came.

Where whilome treachery stain'd the English name.

42

Then saw we Afflighem, by ruin rent, Whose venerable fragments strew the land;

Grown wise too late, the multitude lament

The ravage of their own unhappy hand; 250

Its records in their frenzy torn and tost,

Its precious stores of learning wreck'd and lost.

43

Whatever else we saw was cheerful all, The signs of steady labour well repaid;

The grapes were ripe on every cottage wall,

And merry peasants seated in the shade

Of garner, or within the open door, From gather'd hop-vines pluck'd the plenteous store.

44

Through Assche for water and for cakes renown'd

We pass'd, pursuing still our way, though late: 260

And when the shades of night were closing round,

Brussels received us through her friendly gate, . .

Proud city, fated many a change to

And now the seat of new-made monarchy.

II. BRUSSELS

1

Where might a gayer spectacle be found

Than Brussels offer'd on that festive

night, Her squares and palaces irradiate round

To welcome the imperial Muscovite, Who now, the wrongs of Europe twice redress'd.

Came there a welcome and a glorious guest?

9

Her mile-long avenue with lamps was hung.

Innumerous, which diffused a light like day;

Where through the line of splendour, old and young

Paraded all in festival array; ro While fiery barges, plying to and fro, Illumined as they moved the liquid glass below.

3

By day with hurrying crowds the streets were throng'd,

To gain of this great Czar a passing sight;

And music, dance, and banquetings prolong'd

The various work of pleasure through the night.

You might have deem'd, to see that joyous town.

That wretchedness and pain were there unknown.

4

Yet three short months had scarcely pass'd away,

Since, shaken with the approaching battle's breath, 20
Her inmost chambers trembled with

dismay;
And now within her walls insatiate

And now within her walls insatiated Death,

Devourer whom no harvest e'er can fill, The gleanings of that field was gathering still.

Within those walls there linger'd at that [pain,

Many a brave soldier on the bed of Whom aid of human art should ne'er [again;

To see his country and his friends And many a victim of that fell debate, Whose life yet waver'd in the scales of fate.

Some I beheld, for whom the doubtful

Had to the side of life inclined at Emaciate was their form, their features [strength:

The limbs so vigorous late, bereft of And, for their gay habiliments of yore, The habit of the House of Pain they wore.

Some in the courts of that great hospital, That they might taste the sun and open air,

Crawl'd out: or sate beneath the southern wall:

Or, leaning in the gate, stood gazing

In listless guise upon the passers by, Whiling away the hours of slow recovery.

Others in waggons borne abroad I saw, Albeit recovering, still a mournful sight:

and helpless were Languid some stretch'd on straw.

Some more advanced sustain'd themselves upright,

And with bold eye and careless front, methought,

Seem'd to set wounds and death again at nought.

Well had it fared with these: nor went

With those whom war had of a limb bereft.

Leaving the life untouch'd, that they had still [left; But some there were who lived to draw the breath

Of pain through hopeless years of lingering death.

Here might the hideous face of war be

Stript of all pomp, adornment, and disguiso;

It was a dismal spectacle, I ween,

Such as might well to the beholders' mind Bring sudden tears, and make the pious

Grieve for the crimes and follies of mankind.

11

What had it been then in the recent davs

Of that great triumph, when the open wound [wavs

Was festering, and along the crowded Hour after hour was heard the incessant sound

Of wheels, which o'er the rough and stony road

Convey'd their living agonizing load!

Hearts little to the melting mood inclined

Grew sick to see their sufferings; and the thought

Still comes with horror to the shuddering mind

Of those sad days when Belgian ears were taught

The British soldier's cry, half groan, half prayer.

Breathed when his pain is more than he can bear.

Brave spirits, nobly had their part been done!

Brussels could show, where Senne's slow waters glide.

The cannon which their matchless valour won,

Proud trophies of the field, ranged side by side,

Where as they stood in inoffensive row, Enough for health as for existence The solitary guard paced to and fro.

Unconscious instruments of human woe, Some for their mark the royal lilies bore, 80

Fix'd there when Britain was the Bourbon's foe;

And some emboss'd in brazen letters wore

The sign of that abhorr'd misrule, which broke

The guilty nation for a Tyrant's yoke.

15

Others were stampt with that Usurper's name, . .

Recorders thus of many a change were they,

Their deadly work through every change the same;

Nor ever had they seen a bloodier day, Than when, as their late thunders roll'd around,

Brabant in all her cities felt the sound.

16

Then ceased their occupation. From the field 91

Of battle here in triumph were they brought;

Ribands and flowers and laurels half conceal'd

Their brazen mouths, so late with ruin fraught;

Women beheld them pass with joyful eyes,

And children clapt their hands and rent the air with cries.

17

Now idly on the banks of Senne they lay,

Like toys with which a child is pleased no more:

Only the British traveller bends his way

To see them on that unfrequented

shore, 1000 And, as a mournful feeling blends with

And, as a mournful feeling blends with pride,

Remembers those who fought, and those who died.

III. THE FIELD OF BATTLE

1

SOUTHWARD from Brussels lies the field of blood,

Some three hours' journey for a wellgirt man;

A horseman who in haste pursued his road

Would reach it as the second hour began.

The way is through a forest deep and wide,

Extending many a mile on either side.

2

No cheerful woodland this of antic trees, With thickets varied and with sunny glade:

Look where he will, the weary traveller

One gloomy, thick, impenetrable shade to Of tall straight trunks, which move

before his sight,
With interchange of lines of long green light.

3

Here, where the woods receding from the road

Have left on either hand an open space
For fields and gardens and for man's

For fields and gardens and for man's abode,

Stands Waterloo; a little lowly place, Obscure till now, when it hath risen to fame,

And given the victory its English name.

4

What time the second Carlos ruled in Spain,

Last of the Austrian line by Fate decreed, 20

Here Castanaca reared a votive fane, Praying the Patron Saints to bless

with seed His childless sovereign; Heaven denied

an heir,
And Europe mourn'd in blood the frustrate prayer.

Б

That temple to our hearts was hallow'd

For many a wounded Briton there was laid, [allow

With such poor help as time might then From the fresh carnage of the field convey'd;

And they whom human succours could not save

Here in its precincts found a hasty grave. 30

6

And here on marble tablets set on high, In English lines by foreign workmen traced,

Are names familiar to an English eye;
Their brethren here the fit memorials
placed, [tell
Where undernot inscriptions bridge

Whose unadorned inscriptions briefly Their gallant comrades rank, and where they fell.

7

The stateliest monument of public pride Enrich'd with all magnificence of art, To honour Chieftains who in victory died,

Would wake no stronger feeling in the heart

Than these plain tablets, by the soldier's hand

Raised to his comrades in a foreign land.

8

Not far removed you find the burialground,

Yet so that skirts of woodland intervene:

A small enclosure, rudely fenced around; Three grave-stones only for the dead are seen:

One bears the name of some rich villager, The first for whom a stone was planted there.

Q

Beneath the second is a German laid,
Whom Bremen, shaking off the
Frenchman's yoke,
50
Sent with her sons the general cause to

Sent with her sons the general cause to aid; [stroke,

He in the fight received his mortal

Yet for his country's aggravated woes Lived to see vengeance on her hated foes.

10

A son of Erin sleeps below the third;
By friendly hands his body where it
lay

Upon the field of blood had been interr'd,

And thence by those who mourn'd him borne away

In pious reverence for departed worth, Laid here with holy rites in consecrated earth.

11

Repose in peace, brave soldiers, who have found

In Waterloo and Soigny's shade your rest!

Ere this hath British valour made that ground

Sacred to you, and for your foes unblest,

When Marlborough here, victorious in his might
Surprized the French and smote them

Surprized the French, and smote them in their flight.

12

Those wars are as a tale of times gone by,

For so doth perishable fame decay, . . Here on the ground wherein the slaugh-

ter'd lie,

The memory of that fight is pass'd
away:...

70

And even our glorious Blenheim to the field

Of Waterloo and Wellington must yield.

19

Soon shall we reach that scene of mighty deeds.

In one unbending line a short league hence:

Aright the forest from the road recedes, With wide sweep trending south and westward thence;

Aleft along the line it keeps its place, Some half hour's distance at a traveller's pace.

The country here expands, a widespread scene;

No Flemish gardens fringed with willows these, 80

Nor rich Brabantine pastures ever green, With trenches lined and rows of aspin trees:

In tillage here the unwooded open land Returns its increase to the farmer's hand.

1.5

Behold the scene where Slaughter had full sway!

A mile before us lieth Mount St. John, The hamlet which the Highlanders that day

Preserved from spoil; yet as much farther on

The single farm is placed, now known to fame,

Which from the sacred hedge derives its name.

16

Straight onward yet for one like distance more, [stands,

And there the house of Belle Alliance So named, I guess, by some in days of yore, [hands:

In friendship or in wedlock joining Little did they who call'd it thus foresee The place that name should hold in history!

17

Beyond these points the fight extended not . .

Small theatre for such a tragedy!
Its breadth scarce more, from eastern
Papelot

To where the groves of Hougoumont on high

Rear in the west their venerable head, And cover with their shade the countless dead.

18

But wouldst thou tread this celebrated ground, [scene And trace with understanding eyes a Above all other fields of war renown'd, From western Hougoumont thy way begin;

There was our strength on that side, and there first,

In all its force, the storm of battle burst.

19

Strike eastward then across toward La

The single farm: with dead the fields between 110

Are lined, and thou wilt see upon the

Long wave-like dips and swells which intervene,

Such as would breathe the war-horse, and impede,

When that deep soil was wet, his martial speed.

20

This is the ground whereon the young Nassau,

Emuling that day his ancestor's renown, [saw

Received his hurt; admiring Belgium
The youth proved worthy of his
destined crown;

All tongues his prowess on that day proclaim,

And children lisp his praise and bless their Prince's name. 120

21

When thou hast reach'd La Haye, survey it well,

Here was the heat and centre of the strife;

This point must Britain hold whate'er befell,

And here both armies were profuse of life: [by Once it was lost... and then a stander

Belike had trembled for the victory.

22

Not so the leader, on whose equal mind Such interests hung in that momentous day;

So well had he his motley troops assign'd,
That where the vital points of action
lay,
130

There had he placed those soldiers whom he knew

No fears could quail, no dangers could subdue.

Small was his British force, nor had he here

The Portugals, in heart so near allied,
The worthy comrades of his late career,
Who fought so oft and conquer'd at
his side,
[advance,
When, with the Red Cross join'd in brave

When, with the Red Cross join'd in brave The glorious Quinas mock'd the air of France.

24

Now of the troops with whom he took the field

Some were of doubtful faith, and others raw; 140

He station'd these where they might stand or yield; [saw,

But where the stress of battle he fore-There were his links (his own strong words I speak)

And rivets which no human force could break.

25

O my brave countrymen, ye answer'd well

To that heroic trust! Nor less did ye, Whose worth your grateful country aye shall tell.

True children of our sister Germany, Who, while she groan'd beneath the oppressor's chain,

Fought for her freedom in the fields of Spain. 150

26

La Haye, bear witness! sacred is it hight,
And sacred is it truly from that day;
For never braver blood was spent in fight
Than Britain here hath mingled with
the clay.

Set where thou wilt thy foot, thou scarce can'st tread

Here on a spot unhallow'd by the dead.

27

Here was it that the Highlanders withstood [weight

The tide of hostile power, received its
With resolute strength, and stemm'd
and turn'd the flood;

And fitly here, as in that Grecian strait,

The funeral stone might say, Go, traveller, tell

Scotland, that in our duty here we fell.

28

Still eastward from this point thy way pursue.

There grows a single hedge along the lane...

No other is there far or near in view: The raging enemy essay'd in vain

To pass that line, . . a braver foe withstood,

And this whole ground was moisten'd with their blood.

29

Leading his gallant men as he was wont, The hot assailants' onset to repel, 170 Advancing hat in hand, here in the front

Of battle and of danger, Picton fell; Lamented Chief! than whom no braver

His country's annals shall consign to fame.

30

Scheldt had not seen us, had his voice been heard,

Return with shame from her disastrous coast:

But Fortune soon to fairer fields preferr'd

His worth approved, which Cambria long may boast:

France felt him then, and Portugal and Spain

His honour'd memory will for aye retain.

31

Hence to the high-wall'd house of Papelot, 181

The battle's boundary on the left, incline:

Here thou seest Frischermont not far remote.

From whence, like ministers of wrath divine.

The Prussians, issuing on the yielding foe,
Consummated their great and tota

overthrow.

Deem not that I the martial skill should The passing seasons had not yet effaced

Where horse and foot were station'd here to tell,

What points were occupied by either host,

And how the battle raged, and what befell. And how our great Commander's eagle

Which comprehended all, secured the victory.

33

This were the historian's, not the poet's

Such task would ill the gentle Muse beseem.

Who to the thoughtful mind and pious heart

Comes with her offering from this aweful theme:

Content if what she saw and gather'd

She may in unambitious song declare.

34

Look how upon the Ocean's treacherous face

The breeze and summer sunshine softly play, And the green-heaving billows bear no

Of all the wrath and wreck of yesterday;..

So from the field which here we look'd

The vestiges of dreadful war were gone.

35

Earth had received into her silent womb

Her slaughter'd creatures: horse and man they lay,

And friend and foe, within the general tomb.

Equal had been their lot; one fatal

For all, . . one labour, . . and one place And sometimes did the breeze upon its of rest

They found within their common parent's breast. 210

36

The stamp of numerous hoofs impress'd by force

Of cavalry, whose path might still be traced.

Yet Nature every where resumed her course ;

Low pansies to the sun their purple gave.

And the soft poppy blossom'd on the

In parts the careful farmer had renew'd

His labours, late by battle frustrated; And where the unconscious soil had been imbued

With blood, profusely there like water shed.

There had his plough-share turn'd the guilty ground,

And the green corn was springing all around.

38

The graves he left for natural thought humane

Untouch'd; and here and there, where in the strife

Contending feet had trampled down the grain,

Some hardier roots were found, which of their life

Tenacious, had put forth a second head.

And sprung, and car'd, and ripen'd on the dead.

39

Some marks of wreck were scatter'd all around.

As shoe, and belt, and broken bando-

And hats which bore the mark of mortal wound:

Gun-flints and balls for those who closelier peer;

breath

Bear from ill-cover'd graves a taint of death.

More vestige of destructive man was seen

Where man in works of peace had labour'd more;

At Hougoumont the hottest strife had been, Where trees and walls the mournful

record bore

Of war's wild rage, trunks pierced with many a wound,

And roofs and half-burnt rafters on the ground.

41

A goodly mansion this, with gardens fair,

And ancient groves and fruitful orchard wide,

Its dove-cot and its decent house of prayer,

Its ample stalls and garners well supplied,

And spacious bartons clean, well-wall'd around,

Where all the wealth of rural life was found.

42

That goodly mansion on the ground was laid,

Save here and there a blacken'd broken wall;

The wounded who were borne beneath its shade

Had there been crush'd and buried by the fall; 250 And there they lie where they received

their doom, . .

Oh let no hand disturb that honourable tomb!

43

Contiguous to this wreck the little fane,

For worship hallow'd, still uninjured stands,

Save that its Crucifix displays too plain

The marks of outrage from irreverent hands.

Alas, to think such irreligious deed
Of wrong from British soldiers should
proceed!

44

The dove-cot too remains; scared at the fight

The birds sought shelter in the forest shade; 260
But still they kept their native haunts

in sight, And when few days their terror had

allay'd, Forsook again the solitary wood,

For their old home and human neighbourhood.

45

The gardener's dwelling was untouch'd; his wife

Fled with her children to some near retreat,

And there lay trembling for her husband's life:

He stood the issue, saw the foe's retreat,

And lives unhurt where thousands fell around.

To tell the story of that famous ground.

46

His generous dog was well approved that hour, 271

By courage as by love to man allied;

He through the fiery storm and iron shower

Kept the ground bravely by his master's side:

And now when to the stranger's hand he draws,

The noble beest seems conscious of

The noble beast seems conscious of applause.

47

Toward the grove the wall with musket holes

Is pierced; our soldiers here their station held

Against the foe, and many were the souls

Then from their fleshly tenements
expell'd. 280
Six hundred Frenchmen have been

burnt close by,

And underneath one mound their bones

and ashes lie.

One streak of blood upon the wall was traced,

In length a man's just stature from the head;

There where it gushed you saw it uneffaced:

Of all the blood which on that day was shed

This mortal stain alone remain'd impress'd, . .

The alf-devouring earth had drunk the rest.

49

Here from the heaps who strew'd the fatal plain

Was Howard's corse by faithful hands convey'd, 290 And, not to be confounded with the

And, not to be confounded with the slain,

Here in a grave apart with reverence laid,

Till hence his honour'd relics o'er the seas

Were borne to England, there to rest in peace.

50

Another grave had yielded up its dead, From whence to bear his son a father

That he might lay him where his own grey head

Ere long must needs be laid. That soldier's name

Was not remember'd there, yet may the verse

Present this reverent tribute to his herse.

51

Was it a soothing or a mournful thought, Amid this scene of slaughter as we stood.

Where armies had with recent fury fought,

To mark how gentle Nature still pursued

Her quiet course, as if she took no care

For what her noblest work had suffer'd there?

52

The pears had ripen'd on the garden wall:

Those leaves which on the autumnal earth were spread

The trees, though pierced and scarr'd with many a ball,

Had only in their natural season shed:

Flowers were in seed whose buds to swell began

When such wild havor here was made of man!

53

Throughout the garden, fruits and herbs and flowers

You saw in growth, or ripeness, or decay;

The green and well-trimm'd dial mark'd the hours

With gliding shadow as they pass'd away;

Who would have thought, to see this garden fair,
Such horrors had so late been acted

there!

54

Now Hougoumont, farewell to thy domain!

Might I dispose of thee, no woodman's hand 320 Should e'er thy venerable groves profane:

Untouch'd, and like a temple, should they stand,

And, consecrate by general feeling, wave Their branches o'er the ground where sleep the brave.

55

Thy ruins as they fell should aye remain...

What monument so fit for those below?

Thy garden through whole ages should retain

The form and fashion which it weareth now,

That future pilgrims here might all things see, 329 Such as they were at this great victory.

IV. THE SCENE OF WAR

No cloud the azure vault of heaven distain'd

That day, when we the field of war survey'd;

The leaves were falling, but the groves retain'd

Foliage enough for beauty and for shade:

Soft airs prevail'd, and through the sunny hours

The bees were busy on the year's last flowers.

Well was the season with the scene combined.

The autumnal sunshine suited well the mood

Which here possess'd the meditative mind. . .

A human sense upon the field of blood. A Christian thankfulness, a British

pride. Temper'd by solemn thought, yet still

to joy allied.

What British heart that would not feel a flow.

Upon that ground, of elevating pride? What British cheek is there that would not glow

To hear our country blest and magni-

For Britain here was blest by old and young,

Admired by every heart and praised by every tongue.

Not for brave bearing in the field This might perplex the ear, but fail to

Doth grateful Belgium bless the British name;

The order and the perfect honour shown And, had I dared my inner sense belie, soldier's fame:

For this we heard the admiring people

One universal voice sincere of praise.

Yet with indignant feeling they enquired Wherefore we spared the author of this strife?

Why had we not, as highest law required.

With ignominy closed the culprit's

For him alone had all this blood been shed...

Why had not vengeance struck the guilty head?

O God! they said, it was a piteous

To see the after-horrors of the fight, The lingering death, the hopeless

suffering, . . What heart of flesh unmoved could bear the sight?

One man was cause of all this world of woe...

Ye had him, ... and ye did not strike the blow!

How will ye answer to all after time For that great lesson which ye fail'd to give?

As if excess of guilt excused the crime, Black as he is with blood ye let him

Children of evil, take your course henceforth.

For what is Justice but a name on earth!

Vain had it been with these in glosing speech

Of precedents to use the specious tongue:

reach

The heart, from whence that honest feeling sprung:

In all things, have enhanced the The voice of blood was there to join them in their cry.

Ω

We left the field of battle in such mood As human hearts from thence should bear away, 50

And musing thus our purposed route pursued,

Which still through scenes of recent bloodshed lay,

Where Prussia late with strong and stern delight

Hung on her hated foes to persecute their flight.

10

No hour for tarriance that, or for remorse!

Vengeance, who long had hunger'd, took her fill,

And Retribution held its righteous course:

As when in elder time the Sun stood still

On Gibeon, and the Moon above the vale

Of Ajalon hung motionless and pale. 60

11

And what though no portentous day was given

To render here the work of wrath complete,

The Sun, I ween, seem'd standing still in heaven

To those who hurried from that dire defeat;

And, when they pray'd for darkness in their flight,

The Moon arose upon them broad and bright.

12

No covert might they find; the open land.

O'er which so late exultingly they pass'd,

Lay all before them and on either hand;

Close on their flight the avengers follow'd fast,

And when they reach'd Genappe and there drew breath,

Short respite found they there from fear and death.

13

That fatal town betray'd them to more loss;

Through one long street the only passage lay,

And then the narrow bridge they needs must cross

Where Dyle, a shallow streamlet, cross'd the way:

For life they fled, . . no thought had they but fear,

And their own baggage choak'd the outlet here.

14

He who had bridged the Danube's affluent stream.

With all the unbroken Austrian power in sight,

(So had his empire vanish'd like a dream)
Was by this brook impeded in his
flight; . . . [there . .

And then what passions did he witness Rage, terror, execrations, and despair!

15

Ere through the wreck his passage could be made,

Three miserable hours, which seem'd like years,

Was he in that ignoble strait delay'd;
The dreadful Prussian's cry was in
his ears,
[hell
Foor in his beart and in his coult the

Fear in his heart, and in his soul that Whose due rewards he merited so well.

16

Foremost again as he was wont to be In flight, though not the foremost in the strife,

The Tyrant hurried on, of infamy Regardless, nor regarding ought but life; . . [faith

Oh wretch! without the courage or the To die with those whom he had led to death!

17

Meantime his guilty followers in disgrace,
Whose pride for ever now was beaten
down,
[place;
Some in the houses cought a lighter

Some in the houses sought a hiding-While at the entrance of that fatal town Others, who yet some show of heart display'd.

A short vain effort of resistance made:

Feeble and ill-sustain'd! The fee burst through:

With unabating heat they search'd around:

The wretches from their lurking-holes they drew...

Such mercy as the French had given they found;

Death had more victims there in that one hour

Than fifty years might else have render'd to his power.

19

Here did we inn upon our pilgrimage, After such day an unfit resting-place: For who from ghastly thoughts could disengage

The haunted mind, when every where the trace

Of death was seen, ... the blood-stain on the wall.

And musquet-marks in chamber and in hall!

20

All talk too was of death. They shew'd us here

The room where Brunswick's body had been laid. Where his brave followers, bending o'er

the bier.

In bitterness their vow of vengeance made: Chief.

Where Wellington beheld the slaughter'd And for awhile gave way to manly grief.

21

Duhesme, whose crimes the Catalans Upon this ground the noble Brunswick may tell,

Died here; .. with sabre strokes the posts are scored,

Hewn down upon the threshold where he fell.

Himself then tasting of the ruthless (Spain, sword;

A Brunswicker discharged the debt of And where he dropt the stone preserves the stain.

22

Too much of life hath on thy plains been shed.

Brabant! so oft the scene of war's debate:

But ne'er with blood were they so largely fed

As in this rout and wreck; when righteous Fate

Brought on the French, in warning to all times.

A vengeance wide and sweeping as their crimes:

23

Vengeance for Egypt and for Syria's wrong;

For Portugal's unutterable woes: For Germany, who suffer'd all too long

Beneath these lawless, faithless, godless foes;

For blood which on the Lord so long had cried.

For Earth opprest, and Heaven insulted and defied.

We follow'd from Genappe their line of

To the Cross Roads, where Britain's sons sustain'd

Against such perilous force the desperate fight:

Deserving for that field so well maintain'd.

Such fame as for a like devotion's meed

The world hath to the Spartan band decreed.

died.

Led on too rashly by his ardent heart:

Long shall his grateful country tell with

How manfully he chose the better part:

When groaning Germany in chains was bound.

He only of her Princes faithful found.

And here right bravely did the German band

Once more sustain their well-deserved applause:

As when, revenging there their native

In Spain they labour'd for the general

In this most arduous strife none more than they

Endured the heat and burthen of the dav.

Here too we heard the praise of British

Still best approved when most severely tried:

Here were broad patches of loose-lying

Sufficing scarce the mingled bones to hide, . .

And half-uncover'd graves, where one might see

The loathliest features of mortality.

Eastward from hence we struck, and reach'd the field

Of Ligny, where the Prussian, on that dav

By far-outnumbering force constrain'd to yield.

Fronted the foe, and held them still at bav:

And in that brave defeat acquired fresh claim

To glory, and enhanced his country's fame.

29

Here was a scene which fancy might delight

To treasure up among her cherish'd stores.

And bring again before the inward sight Often when she recalls the long-past

hours ; . Well-cultured hill and dale extending

Hamlets and village spires on every side:

30

The autumnal-tinted groves; the upland mill

Which oft was won and lost amid the frav:

Green pastures water'd by the silent rill: The lordly Castle yielding to decay, With bridge and barbacan and moat and

tower, A fairer sight perchance than when it frown'd in power:

31

The avenue before its ruin'd gate, Which when the Castle, suffering less

from time

Than havoc, hath foregone its strength and state. [prime: Uninjured flourisheth in nature's

To us a grateful shade did it supply, Glad of that shelter from the noontide sky:

32

The quarries deep, where many a massive block

For some Parisian monument of pride Hewn with long labour from the granite rock,

Lay in the change of fortune cast aside ;

But rightly with those stones should Prussia build

Her monumental pile on Ligny's bloody field!

The wealthy village bearing but too plain The dismal marks of recent fire and spoil;

Its decent habitants, an active train, And many a one at work with needful

On roof or thatch, the ruin to repair, . . May never War repeat such devastation there!

Ill had we done if we had hurried by A scene in faithful history to be

famed 200 Through long succeeding ages;

may I

The hospitality let pass unnamed,

And courteous kindness on that distant ground,

Which, strangers as we were, for England's sake we found.

35

And dear to England should be Ligny's name.

Prussia and England both were proved that day:

Each generous nation to the other's fame

Her ample tribute of applause will pay;

Long as the memory of those labours past,

Unbroken may their Fair Alliance last!

36

The tales which of that field I could unfold

Better it is that silence should conceal.

They who had seen them shudder'd while they told

Of things so hideous; and they cried with zeal,

One man hath caused all this, of men the worst, . .

O wherefore have ye spared his head accurst!

37

It fits not now to tell our farther way Through many a scene by bounteous nature blest,

Nor how we found, where'er our journey lay,

An Englishman was still an honour'd guest; 220

But still upon this point, where'er we went,

The indignant voice was heard of discontent.

38

And hence there lay, too plainly might we see,

An ominous feeling upon every heart: What hope of lasting order could there be,

They said, where Justice has not had her part?

Wisdom doth rule with Justice by her side;

Justice from Wisdom none may e'er divide.

-39

The shaken mind felt all things insecure:
Accustom'd long to see successful
crimes,
230

And helplessly the heavy yoke endure, They now look'd back upon their fathers' times.

Ere the wild rule of Anarchy began, As to some happier world, or golden age of man.

40

As they who in the vale of years advance.

And the dark eve is closing on their way,

When on their mind the recollections glance [day,

Of early joy, and Hope's delightful Behold, in brighter hues than those of truth,

The light of morning on the fields of youth: 240

41

Those who amid these troubles had grown grey

Recurr'd with mournful feeling to the past:

Blest had we known our blessings, they would say,

We were not worthy that our bliss should last!

Peaceful we were, and flourishing and free.

But madly we required more liberty!

42

Remorseless France had long oppress'd the land,

And for her frantic projects drain'd its blood;

And now they felt the Prussian's heavy hand:

He came to aid them; bravely had he stood 250

In their defence; . . but oh! in peace how ill [will!

The soldier's deeds, how insolent his

One general wish prevail'd, . . if they might see

The happy order of old times restored! Give them their former laws and liberty, This their desires and secret prayers

implored : . .

Forgetful, as the stream of time flows on, That that which passes is for ever gone.

PART II THE VISION

EHEXE NYN EKOHO TOHON, AFE OYME.—PINDAR.

I. THE TOWER

1

I THOUGHT upon these things in solitude, And mused upon them in the silent night;

The open graves, the recent scene of blood.

Were present to the soul's creative sight;

These mournful images my mind possess'd,

And mingled with the visions of my rest.

2

Methought that I was travelling o'er a plain

Whose limits, far beyond all reach of sense,

The aching anxious sight explored in vain.

How I came there I could not tell, nor whence:

Nor where my melancholy journey lay; Only that soon the night would close upon my way.

3

Behind me was a dolorous, dreary scene, With huge and mouldering ruins widely spread;

Wastes which had whilome fertile regions been,

Tombs which had lost all record of the dead;

And where the dim horizon seem'd to close,

Far off the gloomy Pyramids arose.

4

Full fain would I have known what lay before.

But lifted there in vain my mortal eye:

That point with cloud and mist was cover'd o'er,

As though the earth were mingled with the sky.

Yet thither, as some power unseen impell'd,

My blind involuntary way I held.

5

Across the plain innumerable crowds
Like me were on their destined journey
bent.

Toward the land of shadows and of clouds:

One pace they travelled, to one point they went; . .

A motley multitude of old and young, Men of all climes and hues, and every tongue.

3

Ere long I came upon a field of dead, Where heaps of recent carnage fill'd

the way;

A ghastly sight, . . nor was there where to tread,

So thickly slaughter'd, horse and man, they lay.

Methought that in that place of death
I knew

Again the late-seen field of Waterloo.

7

Troubled I stood, and doubtful where to

A cold damp shuddering ran through all my frame;

Fain would I fly from that dread scene, when lo!

A voice as from above pronounced my name; 40

And, looking to the sound, by the way-

I saw a lofty structure edified.

Most like it seem'd to that aspiring Tower

Which old Ambition rear'd on Babel's plain, [power

As if he ween'd in his presumptuous

To scale high Heaven with daring
pride profane;

Such was its giddy height: and round and round

The spiral steps in long ascension wound.

9

Its frail foundations upon sand were placed,

And round about it mouldering rubbish lay; 50

For easily by time and storms defaced
The loose materials crumbled in
decay:

Rising so high, and built so insecure, Ill might such perishable work endure.

10

I not the less went up, and, as I drew Toward the top, more firm the structure seem'd, [view:

With nicer art composed, and fair to Strong and well-built perchance I might have deem'd

The pile, had I not seen and understood Of what frail matter form'd, and on what base it stood.

11

There on the summit a grave personage Received and welcomed me in courteous guise;

On his grey temples were the marks of age.

As one whom years methought should render wise.

I saw that thou wert fill'd with doubt and fear.

He said, and therefore have I call'd thee here.

12

Hence from this eminence sublime I see The wanderings of the erring crowd below,

And, pitying thee in thy perplexity,
Will tell thee all that thou canst need
to know

To guide thy steps aright. I bent my head

As if in thanks, . . And who art thou? I said.

13

He answer'd, I am Wisdom. Mother Earth

Me, in her vigour self-conceiving, bore:

And, as from eldest time I date my birth, Eternally with her shall I endure; Her noblest offspring I, to whom alone The course of sublunary things is known.

14

Master! quoth I, regarding him, I thought

That Wisdom was the child divine of Heaven. 80 So, he replied, have fabling preachers taught.

And the dull World a light belief hath given.

But vainly would these fools my claim decry, . .

Wisdom I am, and of the Earth am I.

15

Thus while he spake I scann'd his features well:

Small but audacious was the Old Man's eye;

His countenance was hard, and seem'd to tell

Of knowledge less than of effrontery. Instruct me then, I said, for thou should'st know,

From whence I came, and whither I must go. 90

16

Art thou then one who would his mind perplex

With knowledge bootless even if attain'd?

Fond man! he answer'd; ... wherefore shouldst thou vex

Thy heart with seeking what may not be gain'd!

Regard not what has been, nor what may be,

O Child of Earth, this Now is all that toucheth thee!

He who performs the journey of to-day Cares not if yesterday were shower or sun:

To-morrow let the heavens be what they may.

And what recks he?.. his wayfare will be done.

Heedless of what hereafter may befall, Live whilst thou livest, for this life is all!

18

I kept my rising indignation down,
That I might hear what farther he
would teach;

Yet on my darken'd brow the instinctive frown,

Gathering at that abominable speech, Maintain'd its place: he mark'd it and pursued,

Tuning his practised tongue to subtle flattery's mood:

19

Do I not know thee, . . that from earliest youth

Knowledge hath been thy only heart's-desire?

Here seeing all things as they are in truth,
I show thee all to which thy thoughts
aspire: [sense,

No vapours here impede the exalted Nor mists of earth attain this eminence.

20

Whither thy way, thou askest me, and what [tend, The region dark whereto thy footsteps

And where by one inevitable lot The course of all you multitude must

Take thou this glass, whose perfect power shall aid

Thy faulty vision, and therewith explore the shade.

21

Eager I look'd; but, seeing with surprize

That the same darkness still the view o'erspread,

Half angrily I turn'd away mine eyes.

Complacent then the Old Man smiled and said,

Darkness is all! what more wouldst thou descry?

Rest now content, for farther none can spy.

22

Now mark me, Child of Earth! he thus pursued; [blind,

Let not the hypocrites thy reason And to the quest of some unreal good Divert with dogmas vain thine erring

mind:
Learn thou, whate'er the motive they
may call,

That Pleasure is the aim, and Self the spring of all.

23

This is the root of knowledge. Wise are they

Who to this guiding principle attend; They, as they press along the world's high-way, [end:

With single aim pursue their steady No vain compunction checks their sure career:

No idle dreams deceive; their heart is here.

24

They from the nature and the fate of man,

Thus clearly understood, derive their strength; 140
Knowing that, as from nothing they

began,
To nothing they must needs return
at length;

This knowledge steels the heart and clears the mind.

And they create on earth the Heaven they find.

95

Such, I made answer, was the Tyrant's creed

Who bruised the nations with his iron rod, [meed

Till on yon field the wretch received his From Britain, and the outstretch'd arm of God! [view, Behold him now, . . Death ever in his The only change for him, . . and Judg-

ment to ensue!

Behold him when the unbidden thoughts

Of his old passions and unbridled power:

As the fierce tiger in confinement lies,
And dreams of blood that he must
taste no more,...

Then, waking in that appetite of rage, Frets to and fro within his narrow cage.

27

Hath he not chosen well? the Old Man replied:

Bravely he aim'd at universal sway; And never earthly Chief was glorified

Like this Napoleon in his prosperous day. 160

All-ruling Fate itself hath not the power To alter what has been: and he has had his hour!

28

Take him, I answer'd, at his fortune's flood;

Russia his friend, the Austrian wars surceased.

When Kings, his creatures some, and some subdued.

Like vassals waited at his marriage feast:

And Europe like a map before him lay, Of which he gave at will, or took away.

29

Call then to mind Navarre's heroic chief,
Wandering by night and day through
wood and glen,
170

His country's sufferings like a private grief [then

Wringing his heart: would Mina even Those perils and that sorrow have foregone

To be that Tyrant on his prosperous

30

But wherefore name I him whose arm was free?

A living hope his noble heart sustain'd, A faith which bade him through all dangers see

The triumph his enduring country gain'd.

See Hofer with no earthly hope to aid,...
His country lost, himself to chains and
death betray'd!
180

31

By those he served deserted in his need; Given to the unrelenting Tyrant's power,

And by his mean revenge condemn'd to bleed...

Would he have barter'd in that aweful hour

His heart, his conscience, and his sure renown.

For the malignant murderer's crimes and crown?

32

Him too, I know, a worthy thought of fame
In that dread trance upheld; . . the

foresight sure
That in his own dear country his good

name

Long as the streams and mountains

should endure; 190
The herdsmen on the hills should sing

his praise,
And children learn his deeds through
all succeeding days.

22

Turn we to those in whom no glorious thought

Lent its strong succour to the passive mind:

Nor stirring enterprize within them wrought:..

Who, to their lot of bitterness resign'd, Endured their sorrows by the world unknown,

And look'd for their reward to Death alone:

34

Mothers within Gerona's leager'd wall,
Who saw their famish'd children pine
and die; . . 200

Widows surviving Zaragoza's fall

To linger in abhorr'd captivity;...
Yet would not have exchanged their
sacred woe

For all the empire of their misereant foe!

Serene the Old Man replied, and smiled with scorn. wear Behold the effect of error! thus to

The days of miserable life forlorn.

Struggling with evil and consum'd with care : . .

Poor fools, whom vain and empty hopes mislead! fmeed.

They reap their sufferings for their only

O false one! I exclaim'd, whom canst thou fool With such gross sophisms, but the

wicked heart?

The pupils of thine own unhappy school Are they who chuse the vain and empty part;

How oft in age, in sickness, and in woe, Have they complain'd that all was vanity below!

Look at that mighty Gaznevide, Mah-

When, pining in his Palace of Delight, He bade the gather'd spoils of realms subdued sight,

Be spread before him to regale his Whate'er the Orient boasts of rich and rare, . .

And then he wept to think what toys they were!

38

Look at the Russian minion when he play'd

With pearls and jewels which surpass'd all price;

And now apart their various hues array'd, [nice,

Blended their colours now in union Then weary of the baubles, with a sigh, Swept them aside, and thought that all was vanity!

39

Wean'd by the fatal Messenger from pride. The Syrian through the streets ex-[wide | posed his shroud;

And one that ravaged kingdoms far and Upon the bed of sickness cried aloud, What boots my empire in this mortal throe.

For the grave calls me now, and I must go!

Thus felt these wretched men, because decav

Had touch'd them in their vitals: Death stood by:

And Reason when the props of flesh gave Purged as with euphrasy the mortal

Who seeks for worldly honours, wealth or power,

Will find them vain indeed at that dread hour! 240

These things are vain; but all things are not so,

The virtues and the hopes of human kind!..

Yea, by the God who, ordering all below. ſmind. In his own image made the immortal

Desires there are which draw from Him their birth.

bring forth lasting fruits for And Heaven and Earth.

Therefore, through evil and through good content,

The righteous man performs his part assign'd; [spent,

In bondage lingering, or with suffering Therefore doth peace support the heroic mind:

And from the dreadful sacrifice of all Meek woman doth not shrink at Duty's call.

Therefore the Martyr clasps the stake in faith,

And sings thanksgiving while the flames aspire;

Victorious over agony and death,

Sublime he stands and triumphs in the fire,

As though to him Elijah's lot were given, And that the Chariot and the steeds of Heaven.

II. THE EVIL PROPHET

WITH that my passionate discourse I brake:

Too fast the thought, too strong the feeling came.

Composed the Old Man listen'd while I spake.

Nor moved to wrath, nor capable of shame:

And, when I ceased, unalter'd was his mien.

His hard eve unabash'd, his front serene.

Hard is it error from the mind to weed, He answer'd, where it strikes so deep a root.

Let us to other argument proceed,

And, if we may, discover what the fruit

Of this long strife, . . what harvest of great good

The World shall reap for all this cost of blood!

Assuming then a frown as thus he said, He stretch'd his hand from that commanding height,

Behold, quoth he, where thrice ten thousand dead

Are laid, the victims of a single fight! And thrice ten thousand more at Ligny

Slain for the prelude to this tragedy!

A drop amid the sea of human woes!..

Thou canst remember when the morning

Of Freedom on rejoicing France arose, Over her vine-clad hills and regions

day.

ĸ

Such and so beautiful that Star's up-

But soon the glorious dawn was overcast:

A baleful track it held across the skies.

Till now through all its fatal changes past,

Its course fulfill'd, its aspects understood.

On Waterloo it hath gone down in blood.

Where now the hopes with which thine ardent youth

Rejoicingly to run its race began? Where now the reign of Liberty and Truth,

The Rights Omnipotent of Equal Man.

The principles should make all discord cease.

And bid poor humankind repose at length in peace?

Behold the Bourbon to that throne by

Restored, from whence by fury he was cast:

Thus to the point where it began its course

The melancholy cycle comes at last; And what are all the intermediate years?..

What, but a bootless waste of blood and tears?

This but a page of the great book of The peace which thus at Waterloo ye

Shall it endure with this exasperate foe?

In gratitude for all that ye have done Will France her ancient enmity forego?

wounded spirit, her envenom'd Her

Fair even as Phosphor who foreruns the Ye know, . . and ample means are left her still.

Q

What though the tresses of her strength be shorn,

The roots remain untouch'd; and, as of old 50

The bondsman Samson felt his power return

To his knit sinews, so shall ye behold France, like a giant fresh from sleep, arise

And rush upon her slumbering enemies.

10

Woe then for Belgium! for this ill-doom'd land,

The theatre of strife through every age!

Look from this eminence whereon we stand, . . [stage

What is the region round us but a
For the mad pastime of Ambition made,
Whereon War's dreadful drama may
be play'd?

60

11

Thus hath it been from history's earliest light,

When yonder by the Sabis Cæsar stood, [fight,

And saw his legions, raging from the Root out the noble nation they subdued; [there

Even at this day the peasant findeth The relics of that ruthless massacre.

12

Need I recall the long religious strife? Or William's hard-fought fields? or Marlborough's fame

Here purchased at such lavish price of life, . .

Or Fontenoy, or Fleurus' later name?
Wherever here the foot of man may tread,
71

The blood of man hath on that spot been shed.

13

Shall then Futurity a happier train Unfold, than this dark picture of the past?

Dream'st thou again of some Saturnian reign, [last?]
Orthat this ill-compacted realm should

Its wealth and weakness to the foe are known,

And the first shock subverts its baseless throne.

14

O wretched country, better should thy soil

Be laid again beneath the invading seas, 80 Thou goodliest masterpiece of human

toil,

If still thou must be doom'd to scenes

like these!
O Destiny inexorable and blind!

O Destiny mexorable and blind!
O miserable lot of poor mankind!

15

Saying thus, he fix'd on me a searching eye

Of stern regard, as if my heart to reach:

Yet gave he now no leisure to reply; For, ere I might dispose my thoughts

for speech,
The Old Man, as one who felt and understood

His strength, the theme of his discourse pursued. 90

16

If we look farther, what shall we behold But everywhere the swelling seeds of ill,

Half-smother'd fires, and causes manifold

Of strife to come; the powerful watching still

For fresh occasion to enlarge his power, The weak and injured waiting for their hour!

17

Will the rude Cossack with his spoils bear back

The love of peace and humanizing art?

Think ye the mighty Moscovite shall lack Some specious business for the ambitious heart; 100

Or the black Eagle, when she moults her plume,

The form and temper of the Dove

From the old Germanic chaos hath there

A happier order of establish'd things? And is the Italian Mind from papal prison

Set free to soar upon its native wings? Or look to Spain, and let her Despot tell If there thy high-raised hopes are answer'd well!

19

At that appeal my spirit breathed a groan,

But he triumphantly pursued his speech:

O Child of Earth, he cried with loftier tone. [teach;

The present and the past one lesson Look where thou wilt, the history of man Is but a thorny maze, without a plan!

The winds which have in viewless heaven their birth.

The waves which in their fury meet the clouds. fearth.

The central storms which shake the solid And from volcanoes burst in fiery (blind. floods.

Are not more vague and purportless and Than is the course of things among mankind! 120

21

Rash hands unravel what the wise have

Realms which in story fill so large a part,

Rear'd by the strong are by the weak undone;

Barbarians overthrow the works of art, And what force spares is sapp'd by sure decay, . .

So earthly things are changed and pass away.

22

And think not thou thy England hath [elude; That she this general fortune should Easier to crush the foreign foe, than quell The malice which misleads the multitude.

And that dread malady of erring zeal. Which like a cancer eats into the common weal.

23

The fabric of her power is undermined: The earthquake underneath it will have wav

And all that glorious structure, as the wind [awav: Scatters a summer cloud, be swept

For Destiny on this terrestrial ball Drives on her iron car, and crushes all.

Thus as he ended, his mysterious form Enlarged, grew dim, and vanish'd from my view.

At once on all sides rush'd the gather'd storm.

The thunders roll'd around, the wild winds blew.

And, as the tempest round the summit beat.

The whole frail fabric shook beneath my feet.

III. THE SACRED MOUNTAIN

But then methought I heard a voice exclaim.

Hither, my Son, Oh, hither take thy flight!

A heavenly voice which call'd me by my name,

And bade me hasten from that treacherous height: The voice it was which I was wont to

Sweet as a Mother's to her infant's ear.

I hesitated not, but at the call

Sprung from the summit of that tottering tower.

There is a motion known in dreams to all, When, buoyant by some self-sustaining power,

Through air we seem to glide, as if set free

130 | From all encumbrance of mortality.

Thus borne aloft I reach'd the Sacred Hill, [behind: And left the scene of tempests far But that old tempter's parting language still [mind;

Press'd like a painful burthen on my The troubled soul had lost her inward light, [Night.

And all within was black as Erebus and

4

The Thoughts which I had known in youth return'd,

But, oh, how changed! a sad and spectral train:

And, while for all the miseries past I mourn'd,

And for the lives which had been given in vain,

In sorrow and in fear I turn'd mine eye From the dark aspects of futurity.

5

I sought the thickest woodland's shade profound,

As suited best my melancholy mood, And cast myself upon the gloomy ground;

When lo! a gradual radiance fill'd

the wood;

A heavenly presence rose upon my view, And in that form divine the aweful Muse I knew.

O

Hath then that Spirit false perplex'd thy heart,

O thou of little faith! severe she cried. Bear with me, Goddess, heavenly as thou art, [plied,

Bear with my earthly nature! I re-And let me pour into thine ear my grief: Thou canst enlighten, thou canst give relief.

7

The ploughshare had gone deep, the sower's hand

Had scatter'd in the open soil the grain; [land; The harrow too had well prepared the I look'd to see the fruit of all this pain!.. 40

Alas! the thorns and old inveterate weed

Have sprung again, and stifled the good seed.

8

I hoped that Italy should break her chains,

Foreign and papal, with the world's applause,

Knit in firm union her divided reigns,
And rear a well-built pile of equal

Then might the wrongs of Venice be forgiven,

And joy should reach Petrarca's soul in Heaven.

9

I hoped that that abhorr'd Idolatry Had in the strife received its mortal wound: 50

The Souls which from beneath the Altar cry,

At length, I thought, had their just vengeance found;...

In purple and in scarlet clad, behold The Harlot sits, adorn'd with gems and gold!

10

The golden cup she bears full to the brim Of her abominations as of yore! Her eyeballs with inebriate triumph

swim:

Hell.

Though drunk with righteous blood, she thirsts for more,

Eager to reassert her influence fell, And once again let loose the Dogs of

11

Woe for that people too who by their path

For these late triumphs first made plain the way;

Whom in the Valley of the Shade of Death

No fears nor fiery sufferings could dismay:

Art could not tempt, nor violence enthrell

Their firm devotion, faithful found through all.

Strange race of haughty heart and stubborn will,

Slavery they love and chains with pride they wear;

Inflexible alike in good or ill,

The inveterate stamp of servitude they bear. 70

Oh fate perverse, to see all change withstood.

There only where all change must needs be good!

13

But them no foe can force, nor friend persuade;

Impassive souls in iron forms inclosed, As though of human mould they were not made,

But of some sterner elements com-

Against offending nations to be sent, The ruthless ministers of punishment.

14

Where are those Minas after that career Wherewith all Europe rang from side to side?

In exile wandering! Where the Mountaineer...

Late, like Pelayo, the Asturian's pride? Had Ferdinand no mercy for that life, Exposed so long for him in daily, . . hourly strife!

15

From her Athenian orator of old Greece never listen'd to sublimer strain

Than that with which, for truth and freedom bold,

Quintana moved the inmost soul of Spain.

What meed is his let Ferdinand declare.. Chains, and the silent dungeon, and despair!

16

For this hath England borne so brave a part! [slain, Spent with endurance, or in battle Is it for this so many an English heart Lies mingled with the insensate soil of Spain!

Is this the issue, this the happy birth In those long throes and that strong agony brought forth!

17

And oh! if England's fatal hour draw nigh, . .

If that most glorious edifice should fall By the wild hands of bestial Anarchy, . .

Then might it seem that He who ordereth all 100 Doth take for sublunary things no care:..

The burthen of that thought is more

than I can bear.

18

Even as a mother listens to her child, My plaint the Muse divine benignant

heard,
Then answer'd in reproving accents
mild,

What if thou seest the fruit of hope deferr'd,

Dost thou for this in faltering faith repine?

A manlier, wiser virtue should be

thine!

19

Ere the good seed can give its fruit in Spain,

The light must shine on that bedarken'd land, 110 And Italy must break her papal chain,

Ere the soil answer to the sower's hand;

For, till the sons their fathers' fault repent,

The old error brings its direful punishment.

90

Hath not experience bade the wise man

Poor hope from innovations prema-

All sudden change is ill; slow grows the tree

Which in its strength through ages shall endure.

it for this so many an English heart Lies mingled with the insensate soil Dormant, but fear not that the seed should die.

Falsely that Tempter taught thee that the past

Was but a blind inextricable maze; Falsely he taught that evil overcast

With gathering tempests these propitious days,

That he in subtle snares thy soul might bind,

And rob thee of thy hopes for humankind.

He told thee the beginning and the end Were indistinguishable all, and dark; And, when from his vain Tower he bade thee bend

Thy curious eye, well knew he that no spark 130

Of heavenly light would reach the baffled sense.

The mists of earth lay round him all too dense.

Must I, as thou hadst chosen the evil

Tell thee that Man is free and God is good? [heart:

These primal truths are rooted in thy But these, being rightly felt and understood.

Should bring with them a hope, calm, constant, sure,

Patient, and on the rock of faith secure.

The Monitress Divine, as thus she spake, Induced me gently on, ascending still, And thus emerging from that mournful brake 141

We drew toward the summit of the hill.

And reach'd a green and sunny place, so As well with long-lost Eden might compare.

25

Broad cedars grew around that lovely glade;

Exempted from decay, and never sere, Their wide spread boughs diffused a fragrant shade;

The cypress incorruptible was here,

With fluted stem and head aspiring high,

Nature's proud column, pointing to the skv. 150

There too the vigorous olive in its pride, As in its own Apulian soil uncheck'd, Tower'd high, and spread its glaucous foliage wide:

With liveliest hues the mead beneath was deck'd.

Gift of that grateful tree that with its

Repays the earth from whence it feeds its fruit.

There too the sacred bay of brighter green

Exalted its rejoicing head on high; And there the martyr's holier palm was

Waving its plumage as the breeze went by All fruits which ripen under genial

Grew there as in another Paradise.

And over all that lovely glade there grew

All wholesome roots and plants of healing power;

The herb of grace, the medicinal rue,

The poppy rich in worth as gay in flower: The hearts-ease that delighteth every

And sage divine and virtuous eurhrasy.

Unwounded here Judæa's balm distill'd Its precious juice; the snowy jasmine here

Spread its luxuriant tresses wide, and fill'd

With fragrance the delicious atmosphere!

More piercing still did orange-flowers dispense

From golden groves the purest joy of sense.

As low it lurk'd the tufted moss between,
The violet there its modest perfume
shed,

Like humble virtue, rather felt than seen: And here the Rose of Sharon rear'd its head.

The glory of all flowers, to sense and sight Yielding their full contentment of delight.

31

A gentle river wound its quiet way Through this sequester'd glade, meandering wide;

Smooth as a mirror here the surface lay, Where the pure lotus, floating in its pride,

Enjoy'd the breath of heaven, the sun's warm beam, [stream.

And the cool freshness of its native

32

Here o'er green weeds, whose tresses waved outspread, [run; With silent lapse the glassy waters Here in fleet motion o'er a pebbly bed Gliding they glance and ripple to the sun:

The stirring breeze that swept them in its flight

Raised on the stream a shower of sparkling light.

33

And all sweet birds sung there their lays of love;

The mellow thrush, the black-bird loud and shrill,

The rapturous nightingale that shook the grove,

Made the ears vibrate and the heartstrings thrill; [sky,

The ambitious lark, that, soaring in the Pour'd forth her lyric strain of ecstasy.

34

Sometimes, when that wild chorus intermits,

The linnet's song was heard amid the trees, 200

A low sweet voice; and sweeter still, at fits, [breeze; The ring-dove's wooing came upon the

While with the wind which moved the leaves among,

The murmuring waters join'd in undersong.

35

The hare disported here and fear'd no ill,

For never evil thing that glade came
nigh; [will,

The sheep were free to wander at their As needing there no earthly shepherd's

The bird sought no concealment for her nest.

So perfect was the peace wherewith those bowers were blest. 210

36

All blending thus with all in one delight, The soul was soothed and satisfied and fill'd:

This mingled bliss of sense and sound and sight

The flow of boisterous mirth might there have still'd,

And, sinking in the gentle spirit deep, Have touch'd those strings of joy which make us weep.

37

Even thus in earthly gardens had it been,

If earthly gardens might with these compare:

But more than all such influences, I ween There was a heavenly virtue in the air, Which laid all vain perplexing thoughts to rest,

And heal'd and calm'd and purified the breast.

38

Then said I to that guide divine, My

When here we enter'd, was o'ercharged with grief,

For evil doubts which I could not controul

Beset my troubled spirit. This relief, . .

This change, . . whence are they? Almost it might seem

I never lived till now; . . all else had been a dream.

My heavenly Teacher answer'd, Say not seem; . .

In this place all things are what they appear; 230
And they who feel the past a feverish

dream

Wake to reality on entering here.
These waters are the Well of Life, and lo!
The Rock of Ages there, from whence
they flow.

40

Saying thus we came upon an inner glade, The holiest place that human eyes might see;

For all that vale was like a temple made

By Nature's hand, and this the
sanctuary;

Where in its bed of living rock, the Rood Of Man's redemption, firmly planted, stood.

41

And at its foot the never-failing Well Of Life profusely flow'd that all might drink.

Most blessed Water! Neither tongue can tell

The blessedness thereof, nor heart can think.

Save only those to whom it hath been given

To taste of that divinest gift of Heaven.

42

There grew a goodly Tree this Well beside; . . [here,

Behold a branch from Eden planted Pluck'd from the Tree of Knowledge, said my guide.

O Child of Adam, put away thy fear,...
In thy first father's grave it hath its
root;
251

Taste thou the bitter, but the wholesome fruit.

43

In awe I heard, and trembled, and obey'd:

The bitterness was even as of death; I felt a cold and piercing thrill pervade My loosen'd limbs, and, losing sight and breath,

To earth I should have fallen in my despair,

Had I not clasp'd the Cross and been supported there.

44

My heart, I thought, was bursting with the force

Of that most fatal fruit; soul-sick I felt, 260

And tears ran down in such continuous course.

As if the very eyes themselves should melt. [say,

But then I heard my heavenly Teacher Drink, and this mortal stound will pass away.

45

I stoopt and drank of that divinest Well, Fresh from the Rock of Ages where it ran:

It had a heavenly quality to quell

My pain: . . I rose a renovated man, And would not now, when that relief was known.

For worlds the needful suffering have foregone. 270

46

Even as the Eagle, (ancient storyers say), When faint with years she feels her flagging wing,

Soars up toward the mid sun's piercing

Then fill'd with fire into some living

Plunges, and, casting there her aged plumes,

The vigorous strength of primal youth resumes:

47

Such change in me that blessed Water wrought;

The bitterness, which from its fatal root

The Tree derived with painful healing fraught.

Pass'd clean away; and in its place the fruit 280

Produced by virtue of that wondrous wave

The savour which in Paradise it gave.

Now, said the heavenly Muse, thou Look now toward the end! no mists mayst advance,

Fitly prepared toward the mountain's height.

O Child of Man, this necessary trance Hath purified from flaw thy mortal sight.

That with scope unconfined of vision free

Thou the beginning and the end mayst

49

She took me by the hand and on we went,

Hope urged me forward and my soul was strong ;

With winged speed we scaled the steep ascent.

Nor seem'd the labour difficult or

Ere on the summit of the sacred hill Upraised I stood, where I might gaze my fill.

50

Below me lay, unfolded like a scroll. The boundless region where I wander'd late,

Where I might see realms spread and oceans roll,

And mountains from their cloudsurmounting state

Dwarf'd like a map beneath the excursive sight,

So ample was the range from that commanding height. 300

51

Eastward with darkness round on every side

An eye of light was in the farthest sky.

Lo, the beginning!.. said my heavenly Guide;

The steady ray, which there thou canst descry.

Comes from lost Eden, from the primal land

Of man 'waved over by the fiery brand'.

52

obscure,

Nor clouds will there impede the strengthen'd sight:

Unblench'd thine eye the vision may endure.

I look'd, . . surrounded with effulgent light More glorious than all glorious hues of

even. The Angel Death stood there in the open

Gate of Heaven.

IV. THE HOPES OF MAN

Now, said my heavenly Teacher, all is clear!..

Bear the Beginning and the End in mind,

The course of human things will then appear

Beneath its proper laws; and thou wilt find.

Through all their seeming labyrinth, the plan

Which 'vindicates the ways of God to Man'.

Free choice doth Man possess of good or ill,

All were but mockery else. From Wisdom's way

Too oft perverted by the tainted will 9 Is his rebellious nature drawn astray; Therefore an inward monitor is given,

A voice that answers to the law of Heaven.

Frail as he is, and as an infant weak, The knowledge of his weakness is his strength:

For succour is vouchsafed to those who seek

In humble faith sincere; and, when at length

Death sets the disembodied spirit free, According to their deeds their lot shall be.

Thus, should the chance of private fortune raise

A transitory doubt. Death answers all. And in the scale of nations, if the ways Of Providence mysterious we may

Yet, rightly view'd, all history doth impart

Comfort and hope and strength to the believing heart.

For through the lapse of ages may the course

Of moral good progressive still be

Though mournful dynasties of Fraud and Force.

Dark Vice and purblind Ignorance intervene:

Empires and Nations rise, decay and fall.

But still the Good survives and perseveres thro' all.

Yea, even in those most lamentable

When, every where to wars and woes a prey.

Earth seem'd but one wide theatre of crimes.

Good unperceived had work'd its silent way,

And all those dread convulsions did but

The obstructed path to give it free career.

But deem not thou some over-ruling Fate,

Directing all things with benign decree.

Through all the turmoil of this mortal state,

Appoints that what is best shall therefore be:

Even as from man his future doom proceeds.

So nations rise or fall according to their deeds.

Light at the first was given to human kind.

And Law was written in the human

If they forsake the Light, perverse of And wilfully prefer the evil part, Then to their own devices are they left, By their own choice of Heaven's support

bereft.

The individual culprit may sometimes Unpunish'd to his after reckoning go: Not thus collective man, . . for public crimes

Draw on their proper punishment below:

When Nations go astray, from age to age The effects remain, a fatal heritage.

Bear witness, Egypt, thy huge monu-

Of priestly fraud and tyranny austere! Bear witness, thou whose only name presents

All holy feelings to religion dear, . . In Earth's dark circlet once the precious

Of living light, . . O fallen Jerusalem! 60

See barbarous Africa, on every side To error, wretchedness, and crimes

resign'd!

Behold the vicious Orient, far and wide Enthrall'd in slavery! As the human mind

Corrupts and goes to wreck, Earth sickens there.

And the contagion taints the ambient air.

12

They had the Light, and from the Light they turn'd;

What marvel if they grope in darkness They had the Law; ... God's natural law they scorn'd,

And, chusing error, thus they pay the Wherever Falsehood and Oppression reign.

There degradation follows in their train

What then in these late days had Europe been, . .

This moral, intellectual heart of earth, . . [sin

From which the nations who lie dead in Should one day yet receive their second birth, . .

To what had she been sunk, if brutal Force

Had taken unrestrain'd its impious course!

14

The Light had been extinguish'd,.. this be sure

The first wise aim of conscious Tyranny, 80

Which knows it may not with the Light endure:

But where Light is not, Freedom cannot be; [is;' 'Where Freedom is not, there no Virtue Where Virtue is not, there no Happiness.

15

If among hateful Tyrants of all times
For endless execration handed down
One may be found surpassing all in
crimes,

One that for infamy should bear the crown.

Napoleon is that man, in guilt the first, Pre-eminently bad among the worst. 90

16

For not, like Soythian conquerors, did he tread

From his youth up the common path of blood; [bred

Nor like some Eastern Tyrant was he In sensual harems, ignorant of good;... Their vices from the circumstance have grown,

His by deliberate purpose were his own.

17

Not led away by circumstance he err'd,
But from the wicked heart his error
came: [ferr'd,
By Fortune to the highest place preHe sought through evil means an evil

aim.

100

And all his ruthless measures were design'd

To enslave, degrade, and brutalize mankind.

18

Some barbarous dream of empire to fulfil,

Those iron ages he would have restored,

When Law was but the ruffian soldier's will,

Might govern'd all, the scentre was

Might govern'd all, the sceptre was the sword,

And Peace, not elsewhere finding where to dwell,

Sought a sad refuge in the convent-cell.

19

Too far had he succeeded! In his mould An evil generation had been framed,

By no religion temper'd or controul'd,
By foul examples of all crimes inflamed,
Of faith, of honour, of compassion
void;...

Such were the fitting agents he employ'd.

20

Believing as you lying Spirit taught,
They to that vain philosophy held
fast,

And trusted that, as they began from nought,

To nothing they should needs return at last;

Hence no restraint of conscience, no remorse,

But every baleful passion took its course. 120

21

And, had they triumph'd, Earth had once again,

To Violence subdued, and impious Pride,

Verged to such state of wickedness, as

The Giantry of old their God defied, And Heaven, impatient of a world like this.

Open'd its flood-gates, and broke up the abyss.

That danger is gone by. On Waterloo
The Tyrant's fortune in the scale was
weigh'd. . .

His fortune and the World's, . . and England threw

Her sword into the balance..down it sway'd;

And, when in battle first he met that foe, There he received his mortal overthrow.

23

O my brave Countrymen, with that I said.

For then my heart with transport overflow'd.

O Men of England! nobly have ye paid The debt which to your ancestors ye owed,

And gather'd for your children's heritage

A glory that shall last from age to age!

24

And we did well, when on our Mountain's height

For Waterloo we raised the festal flame, 140

And in our triumph taught the startled night [name, To ring with Wellington's victorious

Making the far-off mariner admire To see the crest of Skiddaw plumed with fire.

25

The Moon, who had in silence visited

His lonely summit from the birth of
time,

That hour an unavailing splendour shed,
Lost in the effulgence of the flame
sublime, [stood,

In whose broad blaze rejoicingly we And all below a depth of blackest solitude.

26

Fit theatre for this great joy we chose;
For never since above the abating
Flood

Emerging, first that pinnacle arose, Had cause been given for deeper

Had cause been given for deeper gratitude, For prouder joy to every English heart,

When England had so well perform'd her arduous part.

27

The Muse replied with gentle smile benign, . .

Well mayst thou praise the land that gave thee birth,

And bless the Fate which made that country thine;

For of all ages and all parts of earth
To chuse thy time and place did Fate
allow,
161

Wise choice would be this England and this Now.

28

From bodily and mental bondage there Hath Man his full emancipation gain'd:

The viewless and illimitable air

Is not more free than Thought; all unrestrain'd,

Nor pined in want, nor sunk in sensual sloth,

There may the immortal Mind attain its growth.

29

There under Freedom's tutelary wing,
Deliberate Courage fears no human
foe;
170

There, undefiled as in their native spring,
The living waters of Religion flow;
There like a beacon the transmitted

Light
Conspicuous to all nations burneth

30

bright.

The virtuous will she hath, which should aspire

To spread the sphere of happiness and light;

She hath the power to answer her desire, The wisdom to direct her power aright;

The will, the power, the wisdom thus combined.

What glorious prospects open on mankind! 180

Behold! she cried, and lifting up her hand,

The shaping elements obey'd her will:..

A vapour gather'd round our lofty stand, Roll'd in thick volumes o'er the Sacred Hill,

Descending then, its surges far and near Fill'd all the wide subjacent atmosphere.

32

As I have seen from Skiddaw's stony height

The fleecy clouds seud round me on their way,

Condense beneath, and hide the vale from sight,

Then opening, just disclose where
Derwent lay 190
Burnish'd with sunshine like a silver

shield,
Or old Enchanter's glass, for magic
forms fit field;

33

So at her will, in that receding sheet Of mist, wherewith the world was overlaid,

A living picture moved beneath our feet.

A spacious City first was there display'd,

The seat where England from her ancient reign

Doth rule the Ocean as her own domain.

34

Insplendour with those famous cities old,
Whose power it hath surpass'd, it now
might vie;
200
Through many a bridge the weelthy

Through many a bridge the wealthy river roll'd;

Aspiring columns rear'd their heads on high, [gave

Triumphal arches spann'd the roads, and Due guerdon to the memory of the brave.

35

A landscape follow'd, such as might compare [toil: With Flemish fields for well-requited The wonder-working hand had every where [soil; Subdued all circumstance of stubborn

In fen and moor reclaim'd rich gardens smiled,

And populous hamlets rose amid the wild.

36

There the old seaman on his native shore Enjoy'd the competence deserved so well;

The soldier, his dread occupation o'er,
Of well-rewarded service loved to tell;
The grey-hair'd labourer there, whose
work was done.

In comfort saw the day of life go down.

37

Such was the lot of eld; for childhood

The duties which belong to life was taught:

The good seed, early sown and nursed with care.

This bounteous harvest in its season brought; 220
Thus youth for manhood, manhood for

old age Prepared, and found their weal in

every stage.

38

Enough of knowledge unto all was given In wisdom's way to guide their steps on earth,

And make the immortal spirit fit for heaven.

This needful learning was their right of birth;

Further might each who chose it persevere:

No mind was lost for lack of culture here.

39

And that whole happy region swarm'd with life, . .

Village and town; . . as busy bees in spring 230
In sunny days when sweetest flowers

are rife,

Fill fields and gardens with their murmuring.

Oh joy to see the State in perfect health! Her numbers were her pride and power and wealth. 40

Then saw I, as the magic picture moved, Her shores enrich'd with many a port and pier:

No gift of liberal Nature unimproved. The seas their never failing harvest

Supplied, as bounteous as the air which Israel, when manna fell from heaven for bread.

41

Many a tall vessel in her harbours lay, About to spread its canvass to the breeze.

Bound upon happy errand to convey The adventurous colonist beyond the seas.

Toward those distant lands, where Britain blest

With her redundant life the East and West.

42

The landscape changed; . . a region next was seen,

Where sable swans on rivers yet ungreen:

Glided through broad savannahs ever Innumerous flocks and herds were feeding round, 250

scatter'd farms appear'd and hamlets fair

And rising towns, which made another Britain there.

Then, thick as stars which stud the moonless sky, [seen: Green islands in a peaceful sea were Darken'd no more with blind idolatry, Nor curst with hideous usages obscene. But heal'd of leprous crimes, from butchering strife

Deliver'd, and reclaim'd to moral life.

Around the rude Morai, the temple now Of truth, hosannahs to the Holiest rung:

There from the Christian's equal marriage-vow.

virtues sprung ;

Children were taught the paths of heavenly peace,

And age in hope look'd on to its release.

The light those happy Islanders enjoy'd, Good messengers from Britain had convey'd;

(Where might such bounty wiselier be employ'd ?)

One people with their teachers were they made.

Their arts, their language, and their faith the same,

And blest in all, for all they blest the British name. 270

Then rose a different land, where loftiest trees

High o'er the grove their fan-like foliage rear;

Where spicy bowers upon the passing breeze

Diffuse their precious fragrance far and near:

And, yet untaught to bend his massive

Wisest of brutes, the elephant roams free.

Ministrant there to health and public

The busy axe was heard on every side, Opening new channels, that the noxious

With wind and sunshine might be purified,

And that wise Government, the general friend.

Might every where its eye and arm extend.

The half-brutal Bedah came from his retreat.

To human life by human kindness

The Cingalese beheld that work complete Which Holland in her day had well begun; reign.

The Candian, prospering under Britain's In natural growth the household Blest the redeeming hand which broke his chain.

49

Colours and castes were heeded there no

Laws which depraved, degraded, and opprest,

Were laid aside, for on that happy shore All men with equal liberty were blest; And through the land the breeze upon its swells

Bore the sweet music of the sabbath bells.

50

Again the picture changed: those Isles

With every crime thro' three long centuries curst,

While unrelenting Avarice gave the law; Scene of the injured Indians' sufferings first.

Then doom'd, for Europe's lasting shame, to see

The wider-wasting guilt of Slavery. 300

51

That foulest blot had been at length effaced:

Slavery was gone, and all the power it gave,

Whereby so long our nature was debased, Baleful alike to master and to slave. O lovely Isles! ve were indeed a sight To fill the spirit with intense delight!

52

For willing industry and cheerful toil Perform'd their easy task, with Hope

to aid: And the free children of that happy soil Dwelt each in peace beneath his cocoa's shade;..

A race, who with the European mind, The adapted mould of Africa combined.

Anon, methought that in a spacious Square,

Of some great town the goodly orna-

Three statues I beheld, of sculpture

These, said the Muse, are they whom one consent

Shall there deem worthy of the purest fame:..

Knowest thou who best such gratitude may claim?

Clarkson, I answer'd, first; whom to have seen

And known in social hours may be my pride, Such friendship being praise; and one,

I ween. side. Is Wilberforce, placed rightly at his Whose eloquent voice in that great cause

was heard So oft and well. But who shall be the third?

Time, said my Teacher, will reveal the name

Of him who with these worthies shall cniov

The equal honour of enduring fame; ... He who the root of evil shall destroy, And from our Laws shall blot the

accursed word Of Slave, shall rightly stand with them preferr'd.

56

Enough! the Goddess cried; with that the cloud

Obey'd, and closed upon the magic scene:

Thus much, quoth she, is to thine hopes allow'd:

Ills may impede, delays may inter-

But scenes like these the coming age will

If England but pursue the course of righteousness.

57

On she must go progressively in good, In wisdom and in weal, . . or she must fflood.

Like Ocean, she may have her ebb and But stagnates not. And now her path is plain :

wane.

Heaven's first command she may fulfil in peace,

Replenishing the earth with her increase.

58

Peace she hath won, . . with her victorious hand

Hath won through rightful war auspicious peace;

Nor this alone, but that in every land
The withering rule of violence may
cease. [crown'd!

Was ever War with such blest victory
Did ever Victory with such fruits
abound!

59

Rightly for this shall all good men rejoice,

They most who most abhor all deeds of blood; 350

Rightly for this with reverential voice Exalt to Heaven their hymns of gratitude;

For ne'er till now did Heaven thy country bless

With such transcendent cause for joy and thankfulness.

60

If they in heart all tyranny abhor,

This was the fall of Freedom's direst foe:

If they detest the impious lust of war, Here hath that passion had its overthrow:..

As the best prospects of mankind are dear.

Their joy should be complete, their prayers of praise sincere. 360

61

And thou to whom in spirit at this hour The vision of thy Country's bliss is given,

Who feelest that she holds her trusted power

To do the will and spread the word of Heaven, . .

Hold fast the faith which animates thy mind,

And in thy songs proclaim the hopes of humankind.

MISCELLANEOUS POETICAL REMAINS.

FRAGMENTARY THOUGHTS

OCCASIONED BY HIS SON'S DEATH.1

Thy life was a day, and, sum it well, life is but a week of such days,—with how much storm, and cold, and darkness! Thine was a sweet spring holiday,—a vernal Sabbath, all sunshine, hope, and promise.

and that name
In sacred silence buried, which was still
At morn and eve the never-wearying
theme

Of dear discourse.

¹ Letter to Mr. W. Taylor, March, 1817. 'I have begun a desultory poem in blank verse, pitched in a higher key than Cowper's, and in a wiser strain of philosophy than Young's; but as yet I have not recovered heart enough to proceed with it; nor is it likely that it will be published during my life.'

playful thoughts Turn'd now to gall and esel.

He to whom Heaven in mercy hath assign'd

Life's wholesome wormwood, fears no bitterness when

From th' hand of Death he drinks the Amreeta cup.

Beauties of Nature,—the passion of my youth,

Nursed up and ripen'd to a settled love, Whereto my heart is wedded.

Feeling at Westminster, when summer evening sent a sadness to my heart, and I sate pining for green fields, and banks of flowers, and running streams,—or dreaming of Avon and her rocks and woods.

No more great attempts, only a few autumnal flowers, like second primroses, &c.

They who look for me in our Father's kingdom

Will look for Him also; inseparably Shall we be so remember'd.

The Grave the house of Hope: It is the haven whither we are bound On the rough sea of life, and thence she lands

In her own country, on the immortal shore.

Come, then,

Pain and Infirmity—appointed guests, My heart is ready.

My soul

Needed perhaps a longer discipline, Or sorer penance, here.

A respite something like repose is gain'd While I invoke them, and the troubled tide

Of feeling, for a while allay'd, obeys
A tranquillising influence, that might
seem

By some benign intelligence dispensed, Who lends an ear to man.

They are not, though,

Mere unrealities: rather, I ween, The ancient Poets, in the graceful garb Of fiction, have transmitted earliest truths.

Ill understood; adorning, as they deem'd,

With mythic tales things erringly received,

And mingling with primeval verities Their own devices vain. For what to us Scripture assures, by searching proof confirm'd,

And inward certainty of sober Faith, Tradition unto them deliver'd down Changed and corrupted in the course of

And haply also by delusive art Of Evil Powers.——

IMAGINATION AND REALITY

THE hill was in the sunshine gay and green,

The vale below could not be seen;
A cloud hung over it.

A thin white cloud, that scarce was seen to fly,

So slowly did it flit;
Yet cloud methinks I err in calling it,
It spread so evenly along the sky.

It gave the hills beyond a hue
So becutiful and blue,

That I stood loitering for the view: to Loitering and musing thoughtfully stood I.

For well those hills I knew, And many a time had travell'd them all o'er:

Yet now such change the hazy air had wrought,

That I could well have thought I never had beheld the scene before. But while I gazed the cloud was

passing by;
On the slow air it slowly travell'd on,
Eftsoon and that deceitful haze was
gone,

Which had beguiled me with its mockery; 2

And all things seem'd again the things they were.

Alas! but then they were not half so fair

As I had shaped them in the hazy air!

ADDITIONAL FRAGMENT

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF HIS SON

DAUGHTERS of Jove and of Mncmosyne, Pierian sisters, in whose sacred paths, From my youth up these duteous feet

have trod;

Ye who with your awakening influence warm'd

My youthful heart, disdaining not to accept

The first fruits of an offering immature, And who into my riper strains have breathed

Truth, knowledge, life, and immortality; An earthly heritage indefeasible Assuring to me thus, with Bards of old, With the blind Grecian of the rocky isle, The Mantuan, and the Tuscan; and, more dear

To me than all of elder Rome and Greece,

My honour'd master, who on Mulla's side.

Mid the green alders, mused his heavenly lay;

Be with me, O ye Nymphs of Castaly Divine, be with me now; ye who so oft Have given me strength, and confidence, and joy,

O give me comfort now!—to you I look In sorrow, who in gladness heretofore, Yet never but with deepest faith devout, Have wooed your visitation. For no

strain 22
Of querulous regret I ask your aid,
Impatient of the chastening hand of

Heaven;

But rather that your power may discipline

Thoughts that will rise—may teach me to control

The course of grief, and in discursive flight

Leading my spirit, sometimes through the past,

Sometimes with bold yet not irreverent reach

Into the region of futurity, 30 Abstract her from the sense of present woe.

Short time hath pass'd since from my pilgrimage

To my rejoicing home restored I sung A true thanksgiving song of pure delight.

Never had man whom Heaven would heap with bliss

More happy day, more glad return than mine;

Yon mountains with their wintry robe were clothed

When, from a heart that overflow'd with joy,

I pour'd that happy strain. The snow not yet

Upon their mountain sides hath disappear'd 40
Beneath the breath of spring, and in the

grave Herbert is laid, the child who welcomed

me
With deepest love upon that joyful

day; Herbert, my only and my studious

The sweet companion of my daily walks.

Whose sports, whose studies, and whose thoughts I shared,

Yea in whose life I lived, in whom I saw My better part transmitted and improved,

Child of my heart and mind, the flower and crown 49 Of all my hopes and earthly happiness.

APPENDIX

A LIST OF POEMS NOT REPRINTED IN THE PRESENT EDITION

(a) Poems published in the collected edition of 1837-8.

JOAN OF ARC.

THE VISION OF THE MAID OF ORLEANS.

THE TRIUMPH OF WOMAN.

WAT TYLER.

POEMS CONCERNING THE SLAVE TRADE. Six Sonnets.

To the Genius of Africa.

The Sailor who had served in the Slave Trade.

BOTANY BAY ECLOGUES:-

Elinor.

Humphrey and William. John, Samuel, and Richard.

Frederick. SONNETS:-

I. 'Go, Valentine, and tell that lovely maid.'

II. 'Think, Valentine, as speeding on thy way.'

III. 'Not to thee, Bedford, mournful is the tale.'

Monodramas:-

Sappho. Ximalpoca.

The Wife of Fergus.

Lucretia.

La Caba.

THE AMATORY POEMS OF ABEL SHUFFLEBOTTOM :-Sonnets.

Love Elegies.

LYRIC POEMS. To Horror.

To a Friend.

The Soldier's Wife.

The Chapel Bell.

To Hymen.

Written on the First of December. Written on the First of January.

Written on Sunday Morning.

The Race of Banque.

Written in Alenteio.

To Recovery.

Youth and Ago. The Oak of our Fathers.

The Battle of Pultowa.

Translation of a Greek Ode on Astronomy.

Gooseberry Pie.

To a Bee.

The Destruction of Jerusalem.

The Death of Wallace.

The Spanish Armada.

St. Bartholomew's Day.

Songs of the American Indians :--

The Huron's Address to the Dead. The Peruvian's Dirge Over the Body

of his Father.

Song of the Araucans during a Thunderstorm.

Song of the Chikkasah Widow. The old Chikkasah to his Grandson.

OCCASIONAL PIECES:-The Pauper's Funeral.

The Soldier's Funeral.

OCCASIONAL PIECES (continued) On the Death of a Favourite Old Spaniel.

Autumn.

The Victory.

ENGLISH ECLOGUES:-

The Grandmother's Tale.

The Sailor's Mother.

The Witch.

The Last of the Family.

The Wedding.

NONDESCRIPTS:-

Written the Winter after the Installation at Oxford, 1793.

Snuff.

Cool Reflections during a Midsummer

Walk.

The Pig.

The Dancing Bear.

The Filbert.

Robert the Rhymer's True and Particular Account of Himself.

ODES.

Written War with during the America.

CARMINA AULICA: WRITTEN IN 1814, ON THE ARRIVAL OF THE ALLIED SOVEREIGNS IN ENGLAND.

Ode to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent of the United

Kingdom.

Odes (continued)

His Imperial Majesty. Ode Alexander the First, Emperor of All the Russias.

Ode to His Majesty, Frederick William the Fourth, King of Prussia.

On the Battle of Algiers.

On the Death of Queen Charlotte.

Ode for St. George's Day.

Ode Written after the King's Visit to Ireland.

Ode Written after the King's Visit to Scotland.

The Warning Voice.

On the Portrait of Bishop Heber.

BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES.

Old Christoval's Advice. King Charlemain.

The King of the Crocodiles.

King Ramiro.

Gonzalo Hermiguez. The Surgeon's Warning.

ALL FOR LOVE.

THE PILGRIM TO COMPOSTELLA.

CARMEN NUPTIALE - The Lav of the Laureate.

A VISION OF JUDGEMENT.

(b) Poems published in 'Oliver Newman: With Other Poetical Remains' (1845).

OLIVER NEWMAN

Short Passages of Scripture, Rhythmically Arranged or Paraphrased.

Madrigal, Translated from Luis Martin.

Mohammed; a Fragment Written in 1799.

(c) Poems published in 'Robin Hood . . . a Fragment. By the late Robert Southey and Caroline Southey. With Other Fragments and Poems by R. S. and C. S.' (1847).

Robin Hood, Part I.

The Three Spaniards.

March.

Apart from the poems mentioned in the foregoing list there were many early pieces which Southey did not see fit to republish in 1837-8. The curious in such matters may search for them over the signature 'Bion' in Poems by Robert Lovell and Robert Southey, 1795; in The Annual Anthology for 1799 and 1800; 1 and in Letters from Spain and Portugal, 1797. Three or four poems sent by Southey to Daniel Stuart, editor of The Morning Post, are to be found printed in Letters from the Lake Poets, ed. E. H. Coleridge, 1889; and a few stray verses lie scattered among the volumes of his published correspondence. Southey's contribution to *The Fall of Robespierre* (1794) may be found printed in Colcridge's Poetical Works, ed. J. Dykes Campbell, pp. 216-225. Of that notable drama Coleridge was responsible for the first Act; the second and third were written by Southey in two days, 'as fast as newspapers could be put into blank verse.' A poetical address to Amos Cottle appeared in the latter's volume of Icelandic Poetry, 1797. There are probably other verses contributed by Southey to The Morning Post, The Courier, and other newspapers still lving unclaimed and uncollected in the columns in which they first saw the light. But the bulk of the pieces which he did not republish are to be found in the volumes mentioned above.

¹ In The Annual Anthology Southey's contributions are to be found sometimes over his own name, sometimes over the signatures R. S.,—R.,—R. S. Y.,—S.,—Erthusyo,—Theoderit,—Abel Shufflebottom,—or Byondo; and occasionally without any signature at all. Of the unsigned pieces a few were reprinted in the collected edition of his Poetical Works, in 1837–8. According to Alexander Dyce's MS. notes in the two volumes of The Annual Anthology formerly belonging to Southey (now in the Dyce collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum), Southey was also the author of the verses which appear without a signature in vol. i, pp. 22, 36, 52, 134, 137, 139, 145, 208.

NOTES

N.B. In the references in these Notes, Life = The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey (edited by his son, Cuthbert Southey, 6 vols., 1849, 1850); Warter = Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey (edited by J. W. Warter, 4 vols., 1856).

THALABA THE DESTROYER

Written July 1799-July 1800; published in two volumes, 12mo, by Longman and Rees, in 1801. A second edition was published by Longman in 1809. This edition is more heavily stopped than that of 1801, to the great improvement of the sense; and the variations from the 1801 text are numerous and important. The mottoes to the different books also appeared first in the 1809 edition, and the notes were much amplified and placed at the end of each book, instead of at the bottom of the page. A third edition appeared in 1814, differing from the last only in having the stanzas numbered, and in the lapidary arrangement of the lines. Southey introduced many minor corrections when he finally revised the poem for publication in 1837.

I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. E. H. Coleridge for permission to print the following extract from a letter from S. T. Coleridge to Daniel Stuart, editor

of The Morning Post. The letter bears date, Sept. 19, 1801:—

'Have you seen the Thalaba? It is not altogether a poem exactly to my taste; there are, however, three uncommonly fine passages in it. The first in Volume 1st, beginning (page 130) at the words, "It was the wisdom and the will of Heaven," continued to the end of the 3rd line, page 134: then omitting the intermediate pages, pass on to page 147, and recommence with the words "Their father is their priest", to the last line of page 166, concluding with the words "Of Thalaba went by". This would be a really good extract, and I am sure none of the Reviews will have either feeling or taste to select...

'The next extract² is in Volume 2, page 126, beginning at the words, "All waste, no sign of life," &c., to page 131, ending with the words, "She clapped her

hands for joy."

"The third passage is very short, and uncommonly lyrical; indeed, in versification and conception, superior to anything I have ever seen of Southey's. It must begin at the third line of page 142, Volume 2nd, and be entitled "Khawla", or "The Enchantress's Incantation". "Go out, ye lights, quoth Khawla." &c.—and go on to the last words of page 143."—Letters from the Lake Poets, pp. 20-2.

PAGE 23. Book I, Stanza I. As an illustration of the way in which Southey altered and improved his poems after their first publication, it is interesting

¹ See Book III, Stanzas 16-25.

² See Book VIII, Stanzas 22-30.

³ See Book IX, Stanza 6 to the end of Stanza 9, line 2.

to note the changes introduced into the opening stanza of *Thalaba*. In the first edition the stanza ran as follows:—

How beautiful is night!

A dewy freshness fills the silent air,
No mist obscures, no little cloud
Breaks the whole serene of heaven:
In full-orbed glory the majestic moon
Rolls thro' the dark blue depths.
Beneath her steady ray
The desert circle spreads,
Like the round ocean, girdled with the sky.
How beautiful is night!

The stanza first appeared in its present form in the second edition of the poem. Page 27. Book I, l. 246. The hunter Afri. So cdn. 1837-8. I have retained this reading with hesitation, suspecting it to be a misprint for 'The hunter African' of edd. 1801, 1809.

PAGE 33, ll. 656, 657. 'The angel of death', say the Rabbis, 'holdeth his sword in his hand at the bed's head, having on the end thereof three drops of gall; the sick man, spying this deadly Angel, openeth his mouth with fear, and then those drops fall in, of which one killeth him, the second maketh him pale, the third rotteth and purifieth.'—Purchas. (S.)

PAGE 35. Book II, ll. 165-70. 'These lines contain the various opinions of the Mahommedans respecting the intermediate state of the Blessed, till the

Day of Judgement.' (S.)

Zemzem-well. According to Mahommedan tradition Ishmael, when a newborn babe, made a way for a spring to break forth by dancing with his little feet upon the ground. But the water came forth with such abundance and violence that Hagar could not drink of it. Abraham, coming to the place, stayed the force of the spring, and made Hagar and Ishmael drink. 'The said spring is to this day called Semsem, from Abraham making use of that word to stay it.'—Olearius. (S.)

PAGE 58. Book V, l. 72. City of Peace. Almanzor, the founder of Bagdad, named his new city Dar-al-Salam, the City of Peace. (S.)

1.78. Thy founder the Victorious. 'Almanzor signifies the Victorious.' (S.)

PAGE 61, 1. 282. 'The Mussulmauns use, like the Roman Catholics, a rosary of beads, called Tusbah, or implement of praise . . .'—Note to the Bahar-Danush. (S.)

PAGE 62, ll. 297-9. 'The Mahummedans believe that the decreed events of every man's life are impressed in divine characters on his forehead, though

not to be seen by mortal eye.'-Note to the Bahar-Danush. (S.)

1. 307. 'Zohak was the fifth King of the Pischdadian dynasty, lineally descended from Shedad, who perished with the tribe of Ad. Zohak murdered his predecessor, and invented the punishments of the cross and of flaying alive. The Devil, who had long served him, requested at last, as a recompence, permission to kiss his shoulders; immediately two serpents grew there, who fed upon his flesh, and endeavoured to get at his brain. The Devil now suggested a remedy, which was to quiet them by giving them every day the brains of two men, killed for that purpose: this tyranny lasted long; till a blacksmith of Ispahan, whose children had been nearly all slain to feed the King's serpents, raised his leather apron as the standard of revolt, and deposed Zohak. Zohak, say the Persians, is still living in the cave of his punishment.'—D'Herbelot. Olearius. (S.)

Page 69. Book VI, ll. 287-96. 'In the Caherman Nameh, the Dives having taken in war some of the Peris, imprisoned them in iron cages which they hung from the highest trees they could find. There, from time to time, their companions visited them with the most precious odours. These odours were the usual food of the Peris, and procured them also another advantage, for they prevented the Dives from approaching or molesting them. The Dives could not bear the perfumes, which rendered them gloomy and melancholy whenever they drew near the cage in which a Peri was suspended.'—D'Herbelot. (S.)

PAGE 74. Book VII, l. 184. Zaccoum's fruit accurst. According to the Koran the Zaccoum is a tree which issues from the bottom of Hell. Its fruit is to be eaten by the damned. (S.)

1. 194. The Arabian women 'of the tribe of Himiar, or of the Homerites, are early exercised in riding the horse, and in using the bow, the lance, and the javelin.'—Marigny.

Page 75, l. 264. The Paradise of Sin. 'The story is told by many writers, but with such difference of time and place as wholly to invalidate its truth, even were the circumstances more probable.' (S.) Southey quotes, among others, a long account from Sir John Maundeville.

PAGE 85. Book VIII, Stanza 36. 'How came Mohareb to be Sultan of this island? Every one who has read Don Quixote knows that there are always islands to be had by adventurers. He killed the former Sultan, and reigned in his stead. What could not a Domdaniclite perform? The narration would have interrupted the flow of the main story.' (S.)

PAGE 91. Book IX, ll. 413-16. 'A thicket of balm trees is said to have sprung up from the blood of the Moslem slain at Beder.' (S.) Southey in his note ad loc. quotes Pausanias and other writers as speaking of vipers which were rendered innocuous by feeding on the juice of the balsam-tree.

PAGE 92, l. 492. That most holy night. 'The night, Leileth-ul-cadr, is considered as being particularly consecrated to ineffable mysteries. There is a prevailing opinion, that a thousand secret and invisible prodigies are performed on this night; that all the inanimate beings then pay their adoration to God; that all the waters of the sea lose their saltness, and become fresh at these mysterious moments; that such, in fine, is its sanctity, that prayers said during this night are equal in value to all those which can be said in a thousand successive months. It has not, however, pleased God... to reveal it to the faithful...'—D'Ohsson. (S.)

PAGE 93. Stanzas 44 and 45. These stanzas, together with stanza 1 of Book X, replaced in 1809 a passage, unhappy alike in conception and in execution, which had appeared in the first edition. This cancelled passage consisted of 126 lines—109 in Book IX, and 17 in Book X. In it Mohareb and Khawla have learnt of Maimuna's treachery. To further their revenge they resolve to secure 'the deadliest poison that the Devils know', namely, the last foam on the lips of a red-haired Christian who has been beaten to death. Accordingly, on the following morning, Maimuna and Thalaba watch from the latter's prison the execution of the Christian victim. Khawla catches the poison in a bowl. The bowl bursts, and from the poison which falls upon the ground springs the Upas Tree of Death. Khawla and Mohareb flee away in a whirlwind. The prison walls fall with a crash: and Maimuna and Thalaba are borne in the Chariot of the Winds to the former's cave.

PAGE 102. Book XI, Stanza 11. "Simorg Anka", says my friend Mr. Fox, in a note to his Achmed Ardebeili, "is a bird or griffon of extraordinary strength and size (as its name imports, signifying as large as thirty eagles), which, according

NOTES

749

to the Eastern writers, was sent by the Supreme Being to subdue and chastise the rebellious Dives. It was supposed to possess rational faculties, and the gift of speech."...' (S.)

Page 106. Book XI, II. 367-73. 'Some travellers may perhaps be glad to know that the spring from which this description was taken is near Bristol, about a mile from Stokes-Croft turnpike, and known by the name of the Boiling Well. Other and larger springs of the same kind, called the Lady Pools, are near Shobdon, in Herefordshire.' (S.)

PAGE 115. Book XII, l. 461. 'Araf is a place between the Paradise and the Hell of the Mahommedans; some deem it a veil of separation, some a strong wall. Others hold it to be a Purgatory, in which those believers will remain, whose good and evil works have been so equal, that they were neither virtuous enough to enter Paradise, nor guilty enough to be condemned to the fire of Hell...'—D'Herbelot. (S.)

THE CURSE OF KEHAMA

Written May 1801-Nov. 1809: published in one volume, 4to, by Longman in 1810. In the first edition the stanzas were unnumbered and differently divided. The variations in the text of the first and later editions are comparatively few and unimportant. A fourth edition was published in 1818.

There is a MS. of this poem in Southey's handwriting in the British Museum (No. 36,485). A note appended by Southey's brother, Captain Thomas Southey, R.N., states that this MS. 'was written for me and sent sheet by sheet in letters, the greater part of which were received on board His Majesty's *Dreadnought*, off the coast of France in 1809'. The British Museum Catalogue says, 'the text in many passages differs from that of the poem as printed, agreeing generally with the original form as found in an autograph copy, begun May 28, 1806, now in possession of Miss Warter, the poet's granddaughter, the corrections made in which were embodied in the printed text.'

In the British Museum MS. there is no list of characters and no preface. The motto, 'Curses are like young chickens, &c. . .' is attributed to 'Uncle William', and there is no Greek version of it. The motto in question was a saying of Southey's uncle William, a half-witted brother of Miss Tyler, with whom he lived. The Greek version and its mysterious reference are due to Coleridge. Southey has described William Tyler under the name of William Dove in

The Doctor, &c., Chapter X, P. I. and passim.

There is another MS. of *The Curse of Kehama*, bound up with a MS. of *Roderick*, in the Victoria and Albert Museum (number 480 in the Catalogue of MSS., in the Forster Collection). These MSS. were sent by Southey to W. S. Landor in sections, as the composition of the two poems proceeded. The MS. of *The Curse of Kehama* contains no list of characters, preface, or mottoes. The whole of the from Section VII onwards is in Southey's handwriting. The first section is dated May 28, 1806, and thus represents the original draught as it stood some two years before Southey first met Landor. The ending of the poem is identical with that in the British Museum MS.;—see note on Section XXIV, below.

In an unpublished letter to Landor, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, written at the end of the MS. of the first section of Roderick, and dated Keswick,

July 14, 1810, Southey speaks of The Curse of Kehama as follows:-

'The structure of the poem is its main merit—in this point it is far superior to Thalaba,—in most other respects I am afraid I myself do not like it quite so well, and am well assured that most persons will like it even less,—or in

plainer language will dislike it more. About this I am perfectly indifferent. It is a work sui generis, which like Gebir will find its own admirers, and I have always sincerely echoed your original preface upon that point.'

See also Landor's Works and Life, by J. Forster (1876), vol. i, p. 110.

PAGE 139. Section VII, l. 197. The lute of Nared. In Hindoo legend Nared, a divine son of Brahma, invented the Vina, or Indian lute. (S.)

PAGE 151. Section X, l. 262. his Dragon foe. Ra'hu, a dragon-like monster, according to Hindoo legend strives during eclipses to wreak vengeance on the Sun and Moon for having denounced a fraud which he had practised on the gods. (S.)

PAGE 162. Section XIII, 1. 131. Voomdavee. The wife of Veeshnoo, the goddess of the earth and of patience. (S.).

PAGE 163, Il. 175-6. "The Hindoo poets frequently allude to the fragrant juice which oozes, at certain seasons, from small ducts in the temples of the male elephant, and is useful in relieving him from the redundant moisture with which he is then oppressed; and they even describe the bees as allured by the scent, and mistaking it for that of the sweetest flowers." Wilford, Asiatic Researches. (S.)

Page 191. Section XXI, l. 84. that strange Indian bird. 'The Chatookee. They say it never drinks at the streams below, but, opening its bill when it rains, it catches the drops as they fall from the clouds.'—Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Missionaries, vol. ii, p. 309. (S.)

1. 88. the footless fowl of Heaven: sc. the bird of Paradise, which travellers

said was to be found in the Molucca Islands, born without legs. (S.)

Page 207. Section XXIV. In the British Museum MS. the poem ends as follows after Stanza 23:—

'Thus hath the will of destiny been done,'
Then said the Lord of Padalon.
'Thus are the secret ways of Heaven made known
And justified. Ye heirs of heavenly bliss,
Go to the Swerga Bowers,
And there recall the hours
Of endless happiness.
For thee, Ladurlad, there is yet in store
One glorious task. Return to Earth—restore
Justice and Peace, by Tyranny put down.
Then shalt thou have thine everlasting crown,

RODERICK, THE LAST OF THE GOTHS

And join thy best-beloved for evermore.'

Written Dec 2 1800-July 14 1814 · published in one w

Written, Dec. 2, 1809-July 14, 1814: published in one volume, 4to, by Longman, in 1814. The text of 1838 differs only in a few unimportant particulars from that of the first edition. The mottoes from Tacitus and *The Excursion* first appeared in the second edition, published in 1815. The poem reached a fourth edition early in 1816.

There is in the Victoria and Albert Museum a MS. of the first eighteen sections of *Roderick*,—as they were sent successively by Southey to Landor,—bound up with the corresponding MS. of *The Curse of Kehama*—(No. 480 in the Catalogue

NOTES 751

of MSS. in the Forster Collection). Every section save the first is in Southey's handwriting. At the end of Sections I, II, VI, VII, IX, X, XII, XIII, XIV, XVI, and XVII are letters or postscripts, all signed with Southey's initials, except the first, which is signed in full. The letter to Landor at the end of Section I is dated Keswick, July 14, 1810. The postmark on the last section (XVIII) bears date, Sept. 26, 1814.

In this MS. the poem is called 'Pelayo', for it was Southey's original intention that Pelayo should be its hero. As the work progressed, however, the character of Roderick assumed a more and more predominating importance. ingly, in sending Section VI to Landor, Southey writes to him (in an unpublished

letter) as follows (Sept. 11, 1812):--

'The next book is nearly finished. I believe I must go back to the fifth. and interpolate a passage introductory of Egilona, whose death I think of bringing forward in Book 8, and in whose character I must seek for such a palliation of the rape of Florinda as may make Roderick's crime not so absolutely incompatible with his heroic qualities as it now appears. The truth is that in consequence of having begun the story with Roderick I have imperceptibly been led to make him the prominent personage of the poem, and have given him virtues which it will be very difficult to make consistent with his fall. The description of Egilona, Section V, ll. 124-44, was subsequently inter-

polated with the object described above.

Southey justly regarded Roderick as his highest achievement as a poet. H. Crabb Robinson writes in his Diary for Sept. 15, 1816, 'Of his own works he (Southey) thinks Don Roderick by far the best.' And this statement is corroborated by a letter from Southey to Dr. Gooch, dated Nov. 30, 1814, in which he says, 'You have in Roderick the best which I have done, and, probably, the best that I shall do, which is rather a melancholy feeling for the author' (*Life*, vol. iv, p. 90).

Southey gives the following lively description of his feelings on the completion of this poem in an unpublished letter to his brother, Captain Thomas Southey,

R.N., dated Thursday, 14 July, 1814, now in the British Museum:-

'Monday came and I continued at my task, still writing like a Lion—it was like going up a mountain, the termination seemed to recede as I advanced. So I was still at it on Tuesday middleday, when in came a Laker to interrupt me. . . . This morning I went again to work, and just at dinner-time finished a poem which was begun 2 December 1809. The last book has extended to 580 lines, and the whole work to 7,000, some twenty more or less.—Hourra! your Serene Highness! O be joyful St. Helen's, Auckland, and Greta Hall! . . . I do not feel exactly as Gibbon did, who knew that it was impossible for him ever to execute another work of equal magnitude with his great history; for I neither want subjects nor inclination for fresh attempts. But this poem has been 41 years on hand, and had been thought of as many years before it was begun: and it is impossible not to feel how very doubtful it is whether I may ever again compleat one of equal extent, or of equal merit,—tho' never at any part of my life better disposed for it in will or in power than at the present time.'

It may be well to add here Charles Lamb's appreciation of the poem, as con-

veyed to Southey in a letter of May 6, 1815:-

The story of the brave Maccabee', he wrote, 'was already, you may be sure, familiar to me in all its parts. I have, since the receipt of your present, read it quite through again, and with no diminished pleasure. . . . The parts I have been most pleased with, both on first and second readings, perhaps, are Florinda's palliation of Roderick's crime, confessed to him in his disguise—the retreat of the Palayos (sic) family first discovered—his being made king—"For acclamation

one form must serve more solemn for the breach of old observances." Roderick's vow is extremely fine, and his blessing on the vow of Alphonso:

Towards the troops he spread his arms, As if the expanded soul diffused itself, And carried to all spirits with the act Its effluent inspiration.

'It struck me forcibly that the feeling of these last lines might have been suggested to you by the Cartoon of Paul at Athens. Certain it is that a better motto or guide to that famous attitude can nowhere be found. I shall adopt it as explanatory of that violent but dignified motion.'

The Letters of C. Lamb, ed. Ainger, vol. i, pp. 290-2.

PAGE 210. Section I, l. 30. the name of thy new conqueror. 'Gibel-al-Tarif, the mountain of Tarif, is the received etymology of Gibraltar: Ben Hazel, a Granadan Moor, says expressly, that the mountain derived its name from this general.' (S.)

l. 69. Guadalete had been thus interpreted to Florez. (España Sagrada, t. ix, p. 53.)' (S.)

Page 221. Section III, ll. 99-105. 'The Roman Conimbrica stood about two leagues from the present Coimbra, on the site of Condeyxa Velha. Ataces, king of the Alanes, won it from the Sueves, and, in revenge for its obstinate resistance, dispeopled it, making all its inhabitants, without distinction of persons, work at the foundation of Coimbra, where it now stands... Ataces was an Arian, and therefore made the Catholic bishops and priests work at his new city, but his queen converted him.' (S.)

PAGE 223, l. 189. Diogo's amorous lute. 'Diogo Bernardes, one of the best of the Portugueze poets, was born on the banks of the Lima, and passionately fond of its scenery...' (S.)

PAGE 226, l. 326. The collected edition of 1838 and the one-volume edition reprinted from it read 'Yet' as the first word of this line,—clearly a misprint for the 'Yea' of 1814, which has been restored in the present edition.

PAGE 254. Section X. In sending this Section—perhaps the finest in the whole poem—to Landor, Southey thus writes (in an unpublished letter) of the difficulty which he had experienced in its composition: 'You have here a part of the poem so difficult to get over, even tolerably, that I verily believe, if I had at first thought of making Roderick anything more than a sincere penitent, this difficulty would have deterred me from attempting the subject. There will probably be much to amend in it hereafter,—but I think it is in the right strain, and that the passion is properly made diffuse.' (March 3, 1813.)

It may be added that the changes eventually made in the original draught of this section as it had been sent to Landor were comparatively few and unim-

portant.

PAGE 277. Section XV. In a letter to G. C. Bedford, of August 8, 1815 (Warter, ii, 420), Southey thus anticipates an obvious criticism upon this

and other portions of the poem:

'The strongest objection which has or can be urged against the poem is, that Roderick should not be recognized; but the fact is strictly possible. A friend of mine (poor Charles Danvers), after a fortnight's absence, during which he had been very exposed to weather, sleeping out of doors, and in an open boat, and had endured the greatest anxiety (in assisting a man to escape to America, who would have been hanged for high treason, if he had been taken), was so

altered as literally not to be recognized at the end of that time by an old servant of the family. Think, also, what a difference grey hairs will make; and how soon grief will produce this change has often been seen. When the Queen of France was murdered, her hair was perfectly white. This I have carefully marked in Roderick; I have also made his mother recognize him upon the first hint, and Swerian also. As for Julian, it is nowhere implied that he had ever seen Roderick; on the contrary, Africa was his home.'

PAGE 294. Section XVIII, l. 107. orary:—'a scarf or tippet to be worn

upon the shoulders . . .' (S.)

1. 109. 'Precious or auriphrygiate. "Mitrae . . . triplex est species : una quae pretiosa dicitur, quia gemmis et lapidibus pretiosis, vel laminis aureis, vel argenteis contexta esso solet; altera auriphrygiata sine gemmis, et sine laminis aureis vel argenteis; sed vel aliquibus parvis margaritis composita, vel ex serico albo auro intermisto, vel ex tela aurea simplici sine laminis et margaritis; tertia, quae simplex vocatur sine auro, . . ."—Caeremoniale Episcoporum, l. 1, c. 17.' (S.)

Page 315. Section XXI, ll. 424-34. 'The image of the clouds and the moon I saw from my chamber window at Cintra when going to bed, and noted it down with its application next morning. I have it at this moment distinctly before my eyes with all its accompanying earth-scenery.'

Letter from R. S. to C. W. W. Wynn, March 9, 1815. Life, iv, p. 107.

PAGE 321. Section XXIII, l. 31. 'The humma is a fabulous bird: the head over which its shadow once passes will assuredly be encircled with a crown.'—Wilkes, S. of India, v. i, p. 423. (S.)

SELECTED MINOR POEMS

Page 344. The Dead Friend. This poem was written in memory of Edmund Seward, of Balliol College, Oxford, who died in June, 1795. Seward had been one of the little band who originally entered upon the scheme of Pantisocracy, but he had soon realized that the plan was visionary and impracticable, and had ceased to support it. Southey writes as follows to G. C. Bedford, on June 15, 1795: 'Bedford,—he is dead; my dear Edmund Seward! after six weeks suffering. These, Grosvenor, are the losses that gradually wean us from life. May that man want consolation in his last hour, who would rob the survivor of the belief, that he shall again behold his friend! You know not, Grosvenor, how I loved poor Edmund: he taught me all that I have of good.' (Life, i, p. 240.) And in a letter to J. Rickman of Oct. 5, 1807, he describes Seward as having been his 'nearest and dearest friend' (Warter, ii, 20). There is another allusion to the sorrow of this loss in the 'Hymn to the Penates', lines 198–221.

PAGE 345. Funeral Song for the Princess Charlotte of Wales. The Princess Charlotte, daughter of George IV (then Prince Regent), and heir-presumptive to the throne, married Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg in 1816, and died in child-birth, Nov. 5, 1817.

Page 346, ll. 110-24. During the building of a mausoleum under St. George's Chapel, Windsor, an accidental opening was made by the workmen into the Henry VIII vault. Three coffins were visible in the vault,—two of them those of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour; and, as there was some doubt as to the burial-place of King Charles I, owing to a passage in Lord Clarendon's History of the Rebellion (iii, Part I, p. 393 [Oxford, 1807]), which states that unsuccessful search was made for the body shortly after the Restoration, the Prince Regent

754 NOTES

ordered that the third coffin in the vault should be examined and the doubtful

point set at rest.

The examination was made on April 1, 1813, in the presence of the Prince Regent, the Duke of Cumberland, Count Münster, the Dean of Windsor, Benjamin Charles Stevenson, Esq., and Sir Henry Halford, the King's physician. The coffin was covered by a black velvet pall, and, when this was removed, was seen to bear the inscription, 'Charles I, 1648.' When the wrappings of the body were removed and the face exposed, the pointed beard and lower half of the countenance were found to be perfect, and one eye was visible at the first moment, though it disappeared immediately; the nose, however, was defaced. The loose head was taken out and held up to view: the hair at the back was thick and of a dark-brown colour, while the beard was of a more reddish brown. The muscles at the back of the neck showed the traces of a heavy blow from a sharp instrument.

The head was then replaced, and the coffin closed; and, after a cursory examination of the coffins of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour, the vault was closed.

The above particulars are drawn from a pamphlet in the Royal Library at Windsor, by Sir Henry Halford, entitled, 'An Account of what appeared on Opening the Coffin of King Charles the First in the Vault of King Henry the Eighth in St. George's Chapel at Windsor, on the First of April 1813.' I am indebted for this information to the kindness of the Honourable John Fortescue, Librarian of the Royal Library, Windsor.

PAGE 347. My days among the Dead are past. Cuthbert Southey, in quoting these lines in his Life of his father, adds the following interesting note:—

'I have an additional pleasure in quoting these lines here, because Mr. Wordsworth... once remarked that they possessed a peculiar interest as a most true and touching representation of my father's character. He also wished three alterations to be made in them, in order to reduce the language to correctness and simplicity. In the third line, because the phrase "casual eyes" is too unusual, he proposed—

"Where'er I chance these eyes to cast."

In the sixth line, instead of "converse", "commune", because, as it stands, the accent is wrong.

'In the second stanza, he thought-

"While I understand and feel, . . . My cheeks have often been bedewed"

was a vicious construction grammatically, and proposed instead,-

"My pensive cheeks are oft bedewed."

These suggestions were made too late for my father to profit by them.'—Li/e, v, 110, n.

PAGE 348. The Cataract of Lodore. The origin of this poem is thus described in a letter from Southey to his brother Thomas, dated October 18, 1809 (Warter, ii, 168):—

'I hope . . . you will approve of a description of the water at Lodore, made originally for Edith, and greatly admired by Herbert. In my mind it surpasses any that the tourists have yet printed. Thus it runs—"Tell the people how the water comes down at Lodore? Why it comes thundering, and floundering, and thumping, and flumping, and bumping, and jumping, and hissing, and whizing, and dripping, and skipping, and grumbling, and rumbling, and tumbling, and falling, and brawling, and dashing, and clashing, and splashing, and pouring, and roaring, and whirling, and curling, and leaping, and creeping, and sounding,

and bounding, and clattering, and chattering, with a dreadful uproar,—and that way the water comes down at Lodore."

The doggerel thus first composed by Southey for the amusement of his eldest daughter was developed into the poem as we now know it for the benefit of his youngest child, Cuthbert, more than twelve years later, in 1822 (Warter, iii, 315).

There is a MS. of this poem in the British Museum (Ea. 1966), and another in the museum at Keswick. The latter is an early draught. The former is dated 1822, and begins with the line 'Here it lies darkling'. It includes seventy-one lines instead of seventy-nine, as in the corresponding portion of the poem as printed, and there are a few unimportant variants. The following lines—in addition to the first forty-two—are wanting in the MS.—47-50, 60, 61, 71, and 93; and in some cases the order of the lines is slightly different.

PAGE 350. Inscription II. Epitaph. The Emma of this epitaph was the first wife of Southey's friend, General Peachey, who lived on Vicar's Island in Derwentwater. She had been a Miss Charter, of Bishop's Lydeard, near Taunton. She died in 1809 (Life, ii, 304; Warter, ii, 155).

Page 351. Inscription III. At Barrosa. Lieut.-General Graham (afterwards Lord Lynedoch) defeated the French army under Victor at Barrosa on March 5, 1811.

PAGE 352. Inscription V. Epitaph. This epitaph very probably may refer to the death of Southey's eldest son, Herbert, who died on April 17, 1816, in the tenth year of his age. See Notes on 'The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo' and on the 'Fragmentary Thoughts occasioned by his Son's Death', pp. 762, 763.

Page 353. Dedication of the Author's Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society. The Rev. H. Hill was Southey's maternal uncle. Southey had indeed found him, as he says, 'more than father.' Mr. Hill had paid the expenses of his education at Westminster and at Oxford, and took him to Lisbon with him in 1795. He encouraged Southey—on the occasion of the latter's second visit to Portugal in 1800—to undertake the writing of a History of Portugal, and, until he himself returned to England in 1807, continued to furnish his nephew with Spanish and Portuguese materials for that work. From that time onwards until his death he constantly corresponded with Southey with reference to the latter's literary employments. On his return to England, Mr. Hill married, and held successively the livings of Staunton-on-Wye and Streatham. One of his sons, Herbert, married Bertha Southey in 1839, and edited Southey's Oliver Neuman: With other Poetical Remains, in 1845.

PAGE 357. Ode written during the Negotiations with Buonaparte, in January, 1814. The greater part of this ode was originally included in the Carmen Triumphale. In deference to the advice of J. W. Croker and Rickman Southey struck out from the Carmen five stanzas which were thought too vigorous for an official poem by the Poet Laureate: to these he added three other stanzas, and sent the whole as a separate ode to The Courier.

There is a MS. of this ode in the possession of the Rev. Canon Rawnsley. This MS. ends, as did the version first printed in *The Courier*, with the two following

lines, subsequently cancelled,-

Pluck from the Upstart's head thy sullied crown, Down with the Tyrant! With the murderer down!

Professor Dowden has well characterized this ode as 'perhaps the loftiest chaunt of political invective, inspired by moral indignation, which our literature possesses.' And he observes further: 'Southey stood erect in the presence of power which he believed to be immoral, defied it and execrated it. That he did not perceive

how, in driving the ploughshare of Revolution across Europe of the old régime, Napoleon was terribly accomplishing an inevitable and a beneficent work, may have been an error; but it was an error to which no blame attaches, and in his fierce indictment he states, with ample support of facts, one entire side of the case. The ode is indeed more than a poem; it is a historical document expressing the passion which filled many of the highest minds in England, and which at a later date was the justification of Saint Helena.' (Poems by Robert Southey, 'Golden Treasury' Series, Introd., pp. xxiv, xxv.)

PAGE 360. The March to Moscow. This doggerel march is included here among the Selected Minor Poems, both as being eminently characteristic of the writer and as in some ways complementary to the 'Ode written during the Negotiations with Buonaparte'. Southey wrote it to amuse his children. When it was originally published in The Courier the present fourth stanza was suppressed, and the fifth stanza was added later.

Stanza 4, l. 2. He trightened Mr. Roscoe. William Roscoe (1753-1831), historian, banker, and Whig M.P. for Liverpool 1806-7, was a strong advocate of peace with France, and published several pamphlets between 1793 and 1810

in support of such a policy.

PAGE 366. The Old Woman of Berkeley. There is a MS. of this ballad in the British Museum. It is in Mrs. Southey's handwriting, dated Martin Hall, Oct. 5 (1798), and was enclosed in a letter to Thomas Southey, in which Southey says of it, 'I like the ballad much.'

PAGE 378. Inscription for a Coffee-Pot. These lines, written in 1830, or early in 1831, explain themselves. They were, of course, never published by Southey, but were printed in a note, Warter, iv, pp. 203, 204. It turned out, when the coffee-pot had been chosen, that there was not room on it for the proposed inscription.

PAGE 385. The Widow. These lines are here printed as having given rise to one of the most famous parodies in the language. 'The Friend of Humanity and the Knife-Grinder' was written by Canning and Frere, and appeared in No. II of The Anti-Jacobin on Nov. 27, 1797.

The Old Man's Comforts. These lines are chiefly notable as the original

of Lewis Carroll's brilliant parody in Alice in Wonderland.

PAGE 386. To a Spider. Charles Lamb's criticism of this poem is of interest.

Writing to Southey on March 20, 1799, he says:-

'I am hugely pleased with your "Spider", "your old freemason," as you call m. The first three stanzas are delicious; they seem to me a compound of Burns and Old Quarles, the kind of home-strokes where more is felt than strikes the ear; a terseness, a jocular pathos, which makes one feel in laughter. The measure, too, is novel and pleasing. I could almost wonder Robert Burns in his lifetime never stumbled upon it. The fourth stanza is less striking, as being less original. The fifth falls off. It has no felicity of phrase, no old-fashioned phrase or feeling.

Young hopes, and love's delightful dreams

savour neither of Burns nor Quarles; they seem more like shreds of many a modern sentimental sonnet. The last stanza hath nothing striking in it, if I except the two concluding lines, which are Burns all over.'

The Letters of Charles Lamb, ed. Ainger, i, 104, 105.

PAGE 394. To Margaret Hill. Margaret Hill, to whom this poem is addressed, was Southey's favourite cousin. He appears to have himself defrayed the expenses of her illness, which lasted for more than a year (Warter, i, 164). She died of consumption not long after Southey's return from Portugal in 1801.

Page 396. Written immediately after reading the Speech of Robert Emmet. Robert Emmet (1778-1803), a member of the United Irishmen, planned a rising against the English Government in Ireland, intending to seize Dublin Castle and to hold the Viceroy as a hostage. The rising took place on July 23, 1803, but was easily suppressed; not, however, before the rioters had murdered Lord Kilwarden and Colonel Brown, whom they met on their march. Emmet had fled in horror at the violence of his followers, but was arrested a month later, tried for high treason on Sept. 19, sentenced to death, and executed on the following day.

PAGE 402. To Charles Lamb. These lines were not included in the collected edition of 1837-8, but are printed in the present edition because of their interest as a link in the relations between Southey and Charles Lamb. They were written in reply to a contemptuous review of Lamb's Album Verses and Other Poems. which appeared on July 10, 1830, in the Literary Gazette, of which paper William Jerdan was editor. The review in question contained the following passage: 'If anything could prevent our laughing at the present collection of absurdities, it would be a lamentable conviction of the blinding and engrossing nature of vanity. We could forgive the folly of the original composition, but cannot but marvel at the egotism which has preserved, and the conceit which has published.' Southey's lines were published in The Times on Aug. 6, 1830. They were his first public utterance concerning Lamb since the misunderstanding between them which had arisen out of Southey's allusion to the Essays of Elia in the Quarterly Review for January, 1823—Lamb's famous open letter to him of the following October—and their speedy reconciliation, so honourable to both the friends. Lamb was much touched, and wrote to Bernard Barton on Aug. 30, 1830: 'How noble in Robert Southey to come forward for an old friend, who had treated him so unworthily!' (See E. V. Lucas, Life of Charles Lamb, one-vol. ed. (1907), pp. 508–14, 625 and 626.)

Page 403. The Retrospect. Corston (called Alston in the poem as originally published) is 'a small village about three miles from Bath, a little to the left of the Bristol road'. Southey passed a year there (1781-2) at a school kept by one Thomas Flower. His reminiscences of the time spent there are to be found in his Life and Correspondence, i, 46-58. He says of it, 'Here one year of my life was spent with little profit, and with a good deal of suffering. There could not be a worse school in all respects.'

PAGE 405, Il. 141 sqq. These lines describe a visit which Southey paid to Corston in 1793, after the house had ceased to be used as a school.

PAGE 409. Hymn to the Penates, l. 146. Apega's sculptured form. 'One of the ways and means of the tyrant Nabis. If one of his subjects refused to lend him money, he commanded him to embrace his Apega; the statue of a beautiful woman so formed as to clasp the victim to her breast, in which a pointed dagger was concealed.' (S.)

II. 173-5. When that false Florimel . . . Dissolved away. See Sponser, Faerie Queene, Book V, Canto iii, Stanza 24.

1. 203. Edmund Seward died in June, 1795. See Notes to 'The Dead Friend'.

PAGE 410, Il. 236, 237. The solemn festival whose happiest rites Emblem'd equality. The Saturnalia (S.).

PAGE 420. The Devil's Walk. The genesis of these lines, originally known as 'The Devil's Thoughts', is told by Southey himself in stanzas 37-9. Coleridge, in a note in the 1829 edition of his poems, states that stanzas 1, 2, 3, and 15 were dictated by Southey. The remaining stanzas of the original version were presumably written in collaboration. The verses originally appeared in the Morning

Post of Sept. 6, 1799. The text, as then published, is printed in J. Dykes Campbell's edition of Coleridge's Poetical Works, pp. 621, 622. This first version included, sometimes in a modified form, stanzas 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17,

18, 19, and 57, of the poem as finally printed by Southey in 1838.

The squib had a great circulation. In 1812 Shelley published his imitation, 'The Devil's Walk,' and in 1813 Byron published his 'The Devil's Drive.' In 1826 Caroline Bowles urged Southey, in view of the confident assertions that Porson was the author, to publish the verses as his own, and so to set all doubts at rest. Southey was thus unfortunately moved to expand the lines until they reached their present form. Further particulars may be found in Dykes Campbell's edition of Coleridge's Poetical Works, loc. cit.

PAGE 422, ll. 65, 66. Richard Brothers, a crazy enthusiast, published A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times (1794), and other similar works. He died in 1824.

1. 96. That new Scotch performer. Edward Irving, subsequently founder of the Catholic Apostolic Church, began to preach in London in 1822.

Page 423. Stanza 30. Richard Lalor Sheil (1791-1851), dramatist and politician; Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847); Sidney Smith (1771-1845); Joseph Hume (1777-1855), a prominent Radical M.P. from 1818 to 1855; Lord Brougham (1778-1868); Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832); Peter, seventh Baron King of Ockham (1776-1833); and James Warren Doyle (1786-1834), Roman Catholic bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, are here grouped together chiefly as having been prominent advocates of Catholic Emancipation.

Page 425. Stanza 57. 'If any one should ask who General — meant, the Author begs leave to inform him that he did once see a red-faced person in a dream whom by the dress he took for a General; but he might have been mistaken, and most certainly he did not hear any names mentioned. In simple verity, the author never meant any one, or indeed any thing but to put a concluding stanza to his doggerel' (Coleridge's note in 1829).

INSCRIPTIONS

Page 429, xi. Juan of Padilla, a nobleman of Toledo, commanded the forces of the Comuneros, who rebelled against the government of Charles V in 1520. He was captured at Villalar on April 23, 1521, and was put to death on the following day (see *The Cambridge Modern History*, i, 372-5).

PAGE 432, xvii. Sir Arthur Wellesley defeated the French under de Laborde at Rolissa on Aug. 17, 1808, in his first battle in the Peninsula.

xviii. On Aug. 21, 1808, Sir Arthur Wellesley defeated the French under Junot at Vimeiro.

PAGE 433, xix. The battle of Coruña was fought on Jan. 16, 1809.

Page 434, xxi. Paul Burrard was a cousin of Caroline Bowles, who furnished Southey with some particulars about him. In a letter to Mrs. Hughes of Dec. 31, 1827, Southey says, writing of Caroline Bowles, 'The late Sir Harry Burrard was her uncle, and I suspect, was to have stood in another degree of relationship to her, if the battle of Corunna had not put an end to all her dreams of life. She has never expressly told me this, but that it was so I have no doubt' (Warter, iv, 82).

Page 435, xxii. Sir Arthur Wellesley effected the passage of the Douro in the face of Soult's army on May 12, 1809.

PAGE 436, xxiii. On July 27 and 28, 1809, Sir Arthur Wellesley defeated the French under Victor at Talavera.

xxiv. Massena attacked Wellington's position on the heights of Busaco on Sept. 27, 1810, and was repulsed with a loss of over 4,600 killed, wounded, and missing. At the loftiest summit of the mountain ridge was a convent of Carmelites, where Wellington had fixed his headquarters.

Page 438, xxvi. Massena evacuated Santarem on March 5, 1811. xxvii. Wellington defeated Massena at Fuentes D'Onoro on May 5, 1811. xxviii. The Battle of Albuhera was fought on May 16, 1811.

PAGE 440, xxx. Wellington stormed Ciudad Rodrigo on Jan. 19, 1812. Major-General Craufurd (1764–1812) had won a great reputation as leader of the light division in the Peninsula. He was shot through the body at the very beginning of the assault on Ciudad Rodrigo, and died on Jan. 24. He was buried in the breach itself.

Page 441, xxxii. General (afterwards Sir Rowland and finally Lord) Hill, commanding a force of British and Spanish troops, surprised the French under General Girard at Arroyo Molinos in the early morning of Oct. 28, 1811, and drove them from the village with the loss of considerably more than half their number in killed, wounded, and prisoners.

Page 442, xxxiii. Barré Charles Roberts (1789-1810), second son of Edward Roberts, clerk of the pells in the exchequer, graduated B.A. at Christ Church in 1808. He was a keen antiquarian, and made a fine collection of English coins, now in the possession of the trustees of the British Museum. In Feb., 1809, he contributed to the first number of the Quarterly Review a review of Pinkerton's Essay on Medals. He was seized with consumption in 1807, and died on Jan. 1, 1810. In 1814 there appeared Letters and Miscellaneous Papers of Barré Charles Roberts, with a Memoir of his Life, by a friend; and the volume was noticed by Southey in the Quarterly Review for Jan., 1815.

PAGE 443, xxxv-xxxvii. The Caledonian Canal was completed on Oct. 30, 1822.

PAGE 453. Epistle to Allan Cunningham. This poem was written expressly

for The Anniversary, of which annual Allan Cunningham was editor.

ll. 32-36. Michael Angelo Taylor (1757-1834), M.P. 1800-1802, and continuously from 1806 to 1834, introduced in 1821 a Bill (subsequently passed) 'for giving greater facility to the Prosecution and Abatement of Nuisances arising from Furnaces used in the working of Steam Engines'. He is now chiefly remembered in connexion with 'The Metropolitan Paving Act, 1817', commonly known as 'Michael Angelo Taylor's Act'.

l. 138. In the summer of 1825 Southey was laid up for three weeks under the surgeon's care at Leyden. The Bilderdijks took him into their house and showed him the greatest kindness. Southey revisited them in the following summer, and continued to correspond with them afterwards. Bilderdijk's wife had translated *Roderick* into Dutch verse (see Southey's Preface to the ninth

volume of the 1837-8 ed. of his Poems, supra, p. 19).

In 1838 Southey printed at the end of this epistle the poem by Bilderdijk which had suggested it to him. It has not been thought worth while to reprint the Dutch original in the present edition.

ll. 252 sqq. The following extract from a letter from Southey to Caroline Bowles, dated Jan. 1, 1829, gives some explanation of the portraits referred to :—

'To assist you in the collection of portraits I must tell you what are attainable and what not. The first was engraved in the European Magazine, and is from

a picture by Edridge. The Landlord exists only as a miniature here by poor Miss Betham. The Evangelical is in the New Monthly Magazine, and the French and German copies are of course not attainable in this country. Sir Smug is poor Nash's miniature. Sir Smouch belongs to the Percy Anecdotes. Smouch the Coiner is published for one shilling by a fellow named Lombard in the Strand. And the Minion is the mezzotinto from the villainous picture by Phillips.' (The Correspondence of Robert Southey with Caroline Bowles, p. 151.)

The picture by Edridge here referred to is presumably the pencil drawing made in 1804, formerly in the possession of G. C. Bedford, and now in the

National Portrait Gallery.

MADOC

Begun 1794 (autumn): finally revised in the autumn of 1804: published in one vol., 4to, by Longman in 1805. A second edition appeared in 1807 and a fourth in 1815.

A MS. of 'Madoc in Wales' in Southey's writing, dated Oct. 29, 1804, is in the possession of Canon Rawnsley: the second volume of this MS., containing Madoc in Aztlan', is in the Keswick Museum.

PAGE 461. Part I, Section I, l. 43. Aberfraw. 'The palace of Gwynedd, or North Wales. Rhodri Mawr, about the year 873, fixed the seat of government here.' . . . (S.)

PAGE 467. Section III, l. 19. Dinevawr. 'Dinas Vawr, the Great Palace, the residence of the Princes of Deheubarth, or South Wales. This also was erected

by Rhodri Mawr.' (S.)

1. 24. 'I have taken some liberties here with the history. Hoel kept possession of the throne nearly two years; he then went to Ireland to claim the property of his mother, Pyvog, the daughter of an Irish chieftain; in the meantime David seized the government. Hocl raised all the force he could to recover the crown, but after a severe conflict was wounded and defeated. He returned to Ireland with the remains of his army, which probably consisted chiefly of Irishmen, and there died of his wounds.—(Cambrian Biography).' (S.)

PAGE 475. Section IV, l. 184. Gwenhidwy. A mermaid. (S.)

PAGE 481. Section VI, l. 131. 'Islets of this kind, with dwelling huts upon them, were common upon the Lake of Mexico.'—Clavigero. (S.)

PAGE 496. Section XI, l. 13-17. 'By the principles of the Order a bard was never to bear arms, nor in any other manner to become a party in any dispute, either political or religious. . . . — Owen's Llywarc Hen.' (S.)

PAGE 537. Part II, Section VI, l. 192. 'Snake-worship was common in America.'—Bernal Dias, p. 3. 7. 125. . . .

'It can scarcely be necessary to say that I have attributed to the Hoamen such manners and superstitions as, really existing among the savage tribes of America, were best suited to the plan of the poem.' (S.)

PAGE 545. Section IX, l. 16. Elmur and Aronan. Bards who had borne arms. Aronan was one of three known as 'the three Bards of the Ruddy Spear.' (S.)

PAGE 547, Il. 99-106. 'Tezcalipoca was believed to arrive first, because he was the youngest of the Gods, and never waxed old. . . . ' (S.)

1. 107. Mexitli, woman-born. 'The history of Mexitli's birth is related in the poem, Part II, Section XXI.' (S.)

1. 111. Quetzalcoal. 'God of the Winds.' (S.)

PAGE 548, l. 161. 'The Gods of the conquered nations were kept fastened and caged in the Mexican temples.' (S.)

Page 550. Section X, l. 66. Coatlantona. "The mother of Mexitli, who, being a mortal woman, was made immortal for her son's sake, and appointed Goddess of all herbs, flowers, and trees."—Clavigero." (S.)

PAGE 556. Section XII, l. 85. Tlalocan. 'The Paradise of Tlaloc.' (S.)

Page 567. Section XV, l. 94. "An old priest of the Tlatelucas, when they were at war with the Mexicans, advised them to drink the holy beverage before they went to battle; this was made by washing the Stone of Sacrifice; the king drank first, and then all his chiefs and soldiers in order; it made them eager and impatient for the fight."—Torquemada, l. ii, c. 58." (S.)

PAGE 602. Section XXVII, ll. 35-48. 'My excuse for this insignificant agency, as I fear it will be thought, must be that the fact itself is historically true; by means of this omen the Aztecas were induced to quit their country, after a series of calamities. The leader who had address enough to influence them was Huitziton, a name which I have altered to Yuhidthiton for the sake of euphony; the note of the bird is expressed in Spanish and Italian thus, tihui; the cry of the peewhit cannot be better expressed.' (S.)

BALLADS AND METRICAL TALES

PAGE 636. St. Gualberto. George Burnett (1776?-1811) was a friend of Southey at Balliol, and one of those who joined in the scheme of 'pantisocracy'. His erratic disposition made his life 'a series of unsuccessful attempts in many professions'. He published in 1807 a View of the Present State of Poland, and also edited Specimens of English Prose Writers (1807) and a selection from Milton's Prose Works (1809). For the last two years of his life his friends and relations saw and heard nothing of him, and he died in the Marylebone Infirmary in Feb., 1811.

PAGE 644. Roprecht the Robber. There is a MS. of this ballad (undated) in the British Museum, and another in the possession of Canon Rawnsley.

A TALE OF PARAGUAY

This poem was begun in 1814, laid aside for long intervals, and only finished on Feb. 24, 1825. It was published by Longman in one volume, 12mo, in 1825.

PAGE 657. Dedication, ll. 6-14. Southey first made the acquaintance of John May at Lisbon in 1795-6, and thus began a lifelong friendship.

1. 18. Southey's eldest child, Margaret, died in August 1803, being then not quite a year old.

PAGE 672. Canto II, l. 249. And Father was his name. 'Tupa. It is the Tupi and Guarani name for Father, for Thunder, and for the Supreme Being.' (S.)

PAGE 681. Canto III, ll. 168-71. In 1822 Sara Coleridge, who, with her mother, was still living at Greta Hall, had published (doubtless at Southey's suggestion) a translation in three volumes of Dobrizhoffer's Account of the Abipones.

THE POET'S PILGRIMAGE TO WATERLOO

This poem was published by Longman in one volume, 12mo, in 1816. Southey had toured in Holland and Belgium in Sept.—Oct., 1815, with Mrs. Southey, their eldest daughter Edith, Edward Nash, the artist, and one or two other friends. The Southeys reached Greta Hall on their return on Dec. 6, 1815; and a melancholy interest attaches to the Proem to 'The Poet's Pilgrimage', in which that joyous homecoming is so feelingly described. Herbert, Southey's only boy, the very light of his eyes, was taken ill in the following March, and died on April 17, 1816. He was in the tenth year of his age. Southey never recovered from this blow. 'The head and flower of his carthly happiness' had been, as he said, 'cut off.' And a fresh bitterness must, if possible, have been added to his sorrow by the fact that he was obliged at the time to occupy himself in correcting the proofs of this poem, which had been written in such joy and thankfulness of heart.

Cp. the 'Fragmentary Thoughts occasioned by his Son's Death', and the

'Additional Fragment,' pp. 740-2.

PAGE 699. Proem, l. 51. Her twin-like comrade. Sara Coleridge, who was born in 1802, and had been brought up at Greta Hall.

PAGE 700, l. 109. The aged friend serene. Mrs. Wilson. She had been house-keeper to Mr. Jackson, the former owner of Greta Hall, and continued to live there until her death in 1820.

1. 112. The aunts. Mrs. Coleridge and Mrs. Lovell.

PAGE 701. Part I, i, l. 13. Charles Martel defeated the Saracens at Tours on Oct. 10, 732.

PAGE 702, l. 38. Ourique's consecrated field. Alfonso, count or duke of Portugal, is said to have completely defeated the Moors at Ourique on July 25, 1139, and then to have been hailed the first king.

1. 55. that old siege. Ostend was besieged by the Spaniards from July, 1601,

to Sept., 1604, when it honourably capitulated.

PAGE 704, l. 181. That sisterhood. The Beguines. (S.)

Page 705, l. 211. And one had dwelt with Malabars and Moors. Edward Nash, the artist. Southey made his acquaintance in Belgium in 1815, and they were on terms of close intimacy until Nash's death in Jan., 1821. Nash drew the Portrait of the Author and the Sketch of the Bust published in the one-volume edition of The Doctor, &c., the picture of Bertha, Kate, and Isabel Southey prefixed to vol. v of Southey's Life and Correspondence, and seven of the illustrations in the first edition of The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo.

1. 223. A third who from the Land of Lakes with me Went out....
Henry Koster, author of Travels in Brazil. Southey had become acquainted

with him at Lisbon in 1800.

PAGE 706, l. 246. In 1583 the English garrison of Alost delivered up the town to the Spaniards in consideration of receiving from them their pay, which had been withheld by the States. It is fair to add that the Dutch had not only refused to give them their pay, but had also threatened 'to force them out, or else to famish them' (Grimestone, *Hist. of the Netherlands*, 833, quoted by Southey in his note ad loc.).

l. 247. Afflighen, by ruin rent. 'This magnificent Abbey was destroyed during the Revolution, . . . an act of popular madness which the people in its

vicinity now spoke of with unavailing regret. The library was at one time the richest in Brabant.' (S.)

Page 707, ll. 70-2. 'One of our coachmen, who had been employed (like all his fraternity) in removing the wounded, asked us what was the meaning of the English word O Lord! for thus, he said, the wounded were continually crying out.' (S.)

PAGE 708, ll. 19-24. Charles II of Spain married as his first wife Marie Louise, niece of Louis XIV. His death in 1700 without issue led to the War of the Spanish Succession.

Page 709, ll. 65-6. When Marlborough here, victorious in his might, Surprised the French.... 'A detachment of the French was entrenched at Waterloo Chapel, August 1705, when the Duke of Marlborough advanced to attack the French army at Over Ysche, and this detachment was destroyed with great slaughter (Echard's Gazetteer). . . Marlborough was prevented by the Deputies of the States from pursuing his advantage, and attacking the enemy, at a time when he made sure of victory.—Hist. de l'Empereur Charles VI, t. ii, p. 90.' (S.)

PAGE 710, l. 115. The young Nassau. The Prince of Orange.

PAGE 714, l. 290. Howard's corse. See Childe Harold, Canto iii, Stanzas 29 and 30. The Hon. Frederick Howard (1785–1815), third son of the fifth Earl of Carlisle, was killed at Waterloo late in the evening in a final charge of the left square of the French Guard.

PAGE 719, l. 249. The Prussian's heavy hand. 'Wherever we went we heard one cry of complaint against the Prussians, except at Ligny, where the people had witnessed only their courage and their sufferings. This is the effect of making the military spirit predominate in a nation. The conduct of our men was universally extolled; but it required years of exertion and of severity before Lord Wellington brought the British army to its present state of discipline. . . .

'What I have said of the Prussians relates solely to their conduct in an allied country; and I must also say that the Prussian officers with whom I had the good fortune to associate, were men who in every respect did honour to their profession and to their country. But that the general conduct of their troops in Belgium had excited a strong feeling of disgust and indignation we had abundant and indisputable testimony. In France they had old wrongs to revenge; and forgiveness of injuries is not among the virtues which are taught in camps.' (S.)

PAGE 723, l. 169. Navarre's heroic chief. Mina, a celebrated guerrilla chief, who harassed the French troops in Navarre during the Peninsular War.

PAGE 726, l. 70. Fleurus' later name. The French under Jourdan defeated the Austrians at Fleurus on June 25, 1794.

MISCELLANEOUS POETICAL REMAINS

PAGE 740. Fragmentary Thoughts, occasioned by his Son's Death. These fragments and the two following poems were published by Herbert Hill, Southey's cousin and son-in-law, in 1845, together with other verses, in a volume under the title of Oliver Newman: A New-England Tale: With other Poetical Remains. In the preface to that volume Herbert Hill thus speaks of the occasion and the purpose of these memorials of the greatest sorrow of Southey's life: 'His son Herbert—of whom he wrote thus in the Colloquies, "I called to mind my hopeful

764 NOTES

H. too, so often the sweet companion of my morning walks to this very spot, in whom I had fondly thought my better part should have survived me,

With whom it seem'd my very life Went half away "---

died 17th April, 1816, being about ten years old, a boy of remarkable genius and sweetness of disposition. These Fragments bear a date at their commencement, 3rd May, 1816, but do not seem all written at the same time. The Author at one time contemplated founding upon them a considerable work, of a meditative and deeply serious cast. But, although he, like Schiller, after the vanishing of his ideals, always found "Employment, the never-tiring", one of his truest friends,—yet this particular form of employment, which seemed at first attractive to him, had not, when tried, the soothing effect upon his feelings which was needful; and in March, 1817, he writes that he "had not recovered heart enough to proceed with it".

INDEX OF FIRST LINES

A golden medal was voted to me A respite something like repose is gain'd . A Well there is in the west country . A wrinkled, crabbed man they picture thee And I was once like this! that glowing cheek And wherefore do the Poor complain . Are days of old familiar to thy mind . As thus I stand beside the murmuring stream Athwart the island here, from sea to sea .				•		378 741 364 350 392 387 431 379 443
Ay, Charles! I knew that this would fix thing Beware a speedy friend, the Arabian said.	eye .		•		•	415 380
Bishop Bruno awoke in the dead midnight Bright on the mountain's heathy slope .	:	•	•	•	•	632 612
Callest thou thyself a Patriot? On this fi Charles Lamb, to those who know thee justly Cold was the night wind, drifting fast the sno Cornelius Agrippa went out one day Crossing in unexampled enterprize	dear	•	•	:	:	426 402 385 625 435
Daughters of Jove and of Mnemosyne Divided far by death were they, whose names Do I regret the past	:	:	:	•	:	741 445 388
Edith! ten years are number'd since the day 'Enter, Sir Knight,' the warden cried . Enter this cavern, Stranger! Here awhile	:	:	:	:	:	657 616 42 6
Faint gleams the evening radiance through the Fair be thy fortunes in the distant land . Fair blows the wind, the vessel drives along Fair is the rising morn when o'er the sky Farewell my home, my home no longer now Four months Massena had his quarters here From his brimstone bed at break of day .	sky : :	•		•		383 381 461 379 382 438 421
Gaspar! how pleasantly thy pictured scenes Glory to Thee in thine omnipotence . Grenville, few years have had their course, sin	ce last	:	•	:	:	389 399 397
Happy the dwellers in this holy house He pass'd unquestion'd through the camp He who in this unconsecrated ground	•	:		•	•	391 624 433

					PAGE
He who may chronicle Spain's arduous strife					. 441
Here cavern'd like a beast Honorius pass'd					. 430
Here Craufurd fell, victorious, in the breach	Ī.		·		. 440
Here in the fruitful vales of Somerset .	•	•	•	•	. 350
Here Latimer and Ridley in the flames .	•	•	•	•	. 428
Here Sidney lies, he whom perverted law .	•	•	•	•	. 429
Here was it, Stranger, that the patron Saint	•	•	•	•	. 428
High on a rock whose castle shade	•	•	•	•	. 611
	•	•	•	•	. 23
How beautiful is night	•	•	•	•	
How darkly o'er yon far-off mountain frowns	•	•	•	•	. 380
How does the Water	•	•	•	•	. 348
How many hearts are happy at this hour	•	•	•	•	. 390
I marvel not, O Sun! that unto thee .					. 381
I told my tale of the Holy Thumb	•	•	•	•	. 655
If thou didst feed on western plains of yore	•	•	•	•	. 381
	•	•	•	•	
In an evil day and an hour of woe	•	•	•	•	. 630
In happy hour doth he receive	•	•	•	•	. 447
In its summer pride array'd	•	•	•	•	. 345
It is Antidius the Bishop	•	•	•	•	. 633
It was a little island where he dwelt .	•	•	•	•	. 635
It was a summer evening	•	•	•	•	. 365
Tames was man and wise and went					. 614
Jaspar was poor, and vice and want	•	•	•	•	
Jenner! for ever shall thy honour'd name	•	•	•	•	. 660
John rests below. A man more infamous.	•	•	•	•	. 429
Let no man write my epitaph; let my grave					. 396
	•	•	•	•	_
Little Book, in green and gold	•	•	•	•	. 356
Long had the crimes of Spain cried out to Hea	ven	•	•	•	. 209
Lord! who art merciful as well as just .	•	•	•	•	. 347
Man hath a weary pilgrimage					. 384
Margaret! my Cousin, nay, you must not	• emila	•	•	•	. 394
Mary! ten chequer'd years have past	BIIIIIO	•	•	•	. 344
	•	•	•	•	
Merrily, merrily rung the bells	•	•	•	•	. 623
Midnight, and yet no eye	•	•	•	•	. 118
Mild arch of promise, on the evening sky .	•	•	•	•	. 349
My days among the Dead are past	•	•	•	•	. 347
Mysterious are the ways of Providence .	•	•	•	•	. 434
Nay, Edith! spare the Rose; perhaps it l	ives				. 627
No eye beheld when William plunged .					. 362
No stir in the air, no stir in the sea .					. 372
Not less delighted do I call to mind .	•	•	•	•	. 393
Not often hath the cold insensate earth .	•	•	•	•	. 442
Not to the grave, not to the grave, my Soul	•	•	•	•	. 344
	•	•	•	•	. 353
Not upon marble or sepulchral brass .	•	•	•	•	. ააა
O God! have mercy in this dreadful hour					. 382
O Reader! hast thou ever stood to see .	•	•	•	•	. 343
O thou sweet Lark, who in the heaven so high	•	•	•	•	. 343
o thou sweet mark, who he the heaven so high		•	•		. ამს

					PAGE
Old friend! why you seem bent on parish duty					. 411
On as I journey through the vale of years					. 403
Once more I see thee, Skiddaw! once again					. 698
One day, it matters not to know					. 626
One day to Helbeck I had stroll'd					. 376
Our world hath seen the work of war's debate			•	•	. 701
Our world have soon one world or war a doyage	•	•	•	•	
Passing across a green and lonely lane .					. 414
Pithyrian was a Pagan	•	•	•	• .	. 650
	•	•	•	•	
Pizarro here was born; a greater name.	•	•	•	•	. 430
Porlock, thy verdant vale so fair to sight .	•	•	•	•	. 381
Reader, thou standest upon holy ground .	•	•	•	•	. 436
Roprecht the Robber is taken at last .	•	•	•		. 644
Rotha, after long delays	•	•	•	•	. 357
Seven thousand men lay bleeding on these heigh	ıts				. 438
She comes majestic with her swelling sails					. 382
Slowly thy flowing tide					. 387
Some there will be to whom, as here they read	•	•	•	•	. 443
Sometimes in vouthful years		•	•	•	. 399
Sometimes in youthful years Son of an old and honourable house	•	•	•	•	. 440
Spaniard! if thou art one who bows the knee	•	•	•	•	. 429
	•	•	•	•	
Spaniard or Portugueze! tread reverently.	•	•	•	•	. 439
Spider! thou need'st not run in fear about	•	•	•	•	. 386
Stately you vessel sails adown the tide .	•	•	•	•	. 382
Steep is the soldier's path; nor are the heights		•	•	•	. 352
Stranger! awhile upon this mossy bank .	•				. 427
Stranger! the Man of Nature lies not here				•	. 428
Stranger! whose steps have reach'd this solitud	e				. 350
Sweet to the morning traveller					. 385
ŭ					
That was a memorable day for Spain .					. 659
The Emperor Nap he would set off	-				. 360
The first wish of Queen Mary's heart .	•	•	•	•	. 642
The fountains of Onoro which give name .	•	•	•	•	490
The Friars five have girt their loins	•	•	•	•	. 374
	•	•	•	•	7/1
The hill was in the sunshine gay and green	•	•	•	•	
The Maiden through the favouring night .	•	•	•	•	. 629
The Raven croak'd as she sate at her meal	•	•	•	•	. 367
The sky-lark hath perceived his prison-door	•	•	•	•	. 401
The summer and autumn had been so wet	•	•	•	•	. 371
The work is done, the fabric is complete .		•			. 636
There once was a painter in Catholic days				•	. 621
There was an old man breaking stones .					. 619
They suffered here whom Jefferies doom'd to de	ath				. 430
This is the place where William's kingly power					. 427
This is Vimeiro; yonder stream which flows					. 432
This mound in some remote and dateless day		•	•	•	. 427
This to a mother's sacred memory	•	•	•	•	. 431
Thou chronicle of crimes! I'll read no more	•	•	•	•	. 395
	•	•	•	•	
Thou lingerest, Spring! still wintry is the scene	,	•	•	•	. 380

•				I	PAGE
Thou who hast reach'd this level where the glede		:			444
Though the four quarters of the world have seen					351
Through all Iberia, from the Atlantic shores .					437
Time and the world, whose magnitude and weight					352
Time has been when Rolissa was a name					432
To Butler's venerable memory					446
Turner, thy pencil brings to mind a day	•	•	•		400
Well, Heaven be thank'd! friend Allan, here I am					453
When from these shores the British army first .	:	:	:	:	433
Where these capacious basins, by the laws					445
Who counsels peace at this momentous hour .					357
Who is yonder poor Maniac, whose wildly-fixed eyes					609
Whom are they ushering from the world, with all					417
With many a weary step, at length I gain .		•			379
Yet one Song more! one high and solemn strain		•			406
You wide-extended town, whose roofs and towers		•		•	436
You are old, Father William, the young man cried	•	•	•	•	385
You are old, rather William, the young man cried	•	•	•	•	300

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